TELOS

Number 36 Summer 1978

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INTRODUCTION

In the middle 1960s the search for a credible interpretation of growing social crises such as the Viet Nam War, urban riots and the deadening political confusion which could not come to grips with the new situation led straight to an unprecedented systematic re-examination of that Marxist theory which had been effectively suppressed first during the years of Fascism and Stalinism, and then during the Cold War by well-known "administrative" means. That Marxist thought had been destroyed by firing squads in Germany, Italy, and Spain, concentration camps in Russia, and more subtle but equally effective means in the U.S. rather than by unhampered intellectual criticism, sustained the hope that, given a chance, it could deliver on its promise of providing a truly emancipatory perspective.

Unfortunately, not only did Marxism turn out to be inadequate, but most efforts at theoretical transplants to render it viable—the various types of Neo-Marxisms—only succeeded in generating confusion or, as Bookchin put it, creating an academic fad totally divorced from any social and political import. In his article on "Beyond Neo-Marxism" Bookchin examines some of the fundamental problems with Marxism which make it an expression rather than a solution to the logic of domination, and argues that no eclectic operation can successfully remedy them.

Bookchin's criticisms are largely echoed, in a somewhat impressionistic and sniping mode of presentation which creates as many problems as it clarifies, by George's article "On Contradiction." Since it was a mistake to take as serious philosophical discourse the apologetic idiocies of Leninism, Stalinism and Maoism—at least to the extent that their object was neither philosophy nor social theory but a political expediency which was never made explicit, George's mocking approach may be the most appropriate way to deal with such a miserable Marxist heritage. Notwithstanding the dubious Cartesian leit-motif *of the whole article, the critical points are well-taken. The connections between Marxist science, Marxist "scientists" and the Gulag can no longer be simply shrugged off as rightist propaganda and must come under rigorious scrutiny.*

Yet, the intellectual sloppiness typical of official Marxist-Leninist philosophy is no justification for equally sloppy criticisms which, unlike George, pretend to shortcircuit serious analysis into facile solutions. Thus, the latest French efforts in this direction, e.g., the "nouvelle philosophie," come under a few critical blows in the reviews of Maharia-Odoni, and in Lefort's article on "Then and Now." The new intellectual climate settling in the post-1968 phase of French culture—also typical of most of English and parts of American culture—under the pretense of scientificity and objectivity, obliterates history and philosophical discourse, while generating a new ideological confusion. In a programmatic introduction to the new French journal Libre, *whose general outlook is very close to our own, Lefort proposes a series of new directions for emancipatory theory. Strangely enough, they seem very close to those proposed by Paul Thibaud, the new editor of the French Catholic journal* Esprit—*whose history Dick Howard examines in an introductory note.*

The demystification of the totalitarian underpinnings of Marxist and Neo-Marxist ideology and of equally untenable reactions to it, throws into disarray even fundamental concepts such as "democracy"—which is the subject of analysis of another article by Bobbio elaborating some of the points made in his earlier essays (in Telos *35). Two other articles by Carlo and Dahmer examine in details the socio-economic problems of Yugoslav society and the general structure of Freudo-Marxism. Notwithstanding the relatively orthodox Marxist underpinnings of these last two articles, the authors succeed in throwing considerable light on two very confused and inadequately examined areas.*

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This issue finally includes a considerably expanded 84-page review section. Given the present lack of a clear political or theoretical direction, elaborate critical reviews may provide the best means to come to grips with various problems. Consequently, this section of the journal will probably continue to grow in future issues.

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BEYOND NEO-MARXISM

by Murray Bookchin

I

The failure of socialism, particularly its Marxian variety, to provide a revolutionary alternative has been followed by a highly abstract form of socialist theory that stands sharply at odds with a *practical* revolutionary project. Its retreat from the factory to the academy—an astonishing phenomenon that cannot be justified by viewing "knowledge" as a technical force in society—has denied socialism the right to a decent burial by perpetuating it as a professional ideology. To the extent that the academy itself has become increasingly disengaged from society, it has used socialist theory to indulge its worst habits. The remains of a once-insurgent movement have provided the intellectual nutrients for conceptual frameworks utterly alien to it—a level of discourse, a range of perceptions, a terminology, and a body of pretensions that mutually reinforce the reduction of ideology to socialism and of socialism to ideology.[1] An earlier generation of Marxists, however serious their shortcomings, would have banished the very term "sociology," not to speak of its dessicated categories and its odious pretensions to exactitude.[2] Today, the old Marxist vocabulary has been replaced by a more ennervated one in which socially neutral concepts pirouette around each other in an intellectual ballet that imparts to them an almost dream-like transcendental quality. Shaped by academic templates like speech situations, systems theory, *Verstehen*, and research guided by the technical criteria of sociology, the harsh fact remains that socialism has been converted from a once-viable social reality into the "idea" of socialism.[3]

What is most disturbing about the self-absorption of so many of these "neo-Marxian" tendencies is the promiscuity with which they meld utterly antithetical radical goals and traditions. Libertarian concepts and authoritarian ones, individualist and collectivist, economistic and cultural, scientistic and ethical—all have been funded together into an ecumenical "radicalism" that lacks the consistency required by a serious revolutionary

1. One must leave it to the conscience of the socialist academics to ask themselves if Marx's account of social development as a history of class struggle can be translated into a history of "distorted communication," his critique of political economy into a specific "paradigm" of "intersubjectivity," and his relations of production into "symbolically mediated forms of social interaction." See Albrecht Wellmer, "Communications and Emancipation: Reflections on the Linguistic Turn in Critical Theory" in *On Critical Theory*, ed. John O'Neill (Seabury Press, 1976), p. 254.

2. Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks* (London, 1971), p. 437ff.; and Georg Lukács, "M. Bukharin: Historical Materialism," *Political Writings 1919-1929* (London, 1972), pp. 134-142.

3. It remains to be seen if Habermas's highly formalized theory can be given real social substance by the research of his colleagues at Starnberg or if various phenomenological and structural tendencies that have been drifting through Marxism can bring socialism into a meaningful confrontation with contemporary industrial capitalism. But in all of these cases, theoretical critique has been notable for its absence of radical reconstruction. Neither the later generation of "critical theorists" nor their opponents as reflected by newer formalizations of Marxism have given substance to their visions of freedom and practice.

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practice. Classical Marxian tendencies, functioning under the imperatives of organized political movements, were compelled to press the logic of their premises to the point of a combative social engagement with bourgeois reality. Neo-Marxism enjoys the luxury of theoretical reveries in which basically incompatible visions of freedom intermingle and become diffuse and obscure.

Let me state this problem concretely. Are the differences between decentralization and centralization merely differences of degree or kind? Should we seek to strike some enigmatic "balance" between them or are they fundamentally incompatible with each other? Is direct democracy in a "mass society" impossible without the delegation of power to representatives or must it literally be direct, face-to-face, of the kind that prevailed in the Athenian polis, the French revolutionary sections of 1793, and the New England town meetings? Can direct democracy be equated with workers' councils—an equation that is made not only by neo-Marxists, council communists, but also many anarchosyndicalists? Or do these essentially executive forms stand at odds with the communes and popular assemblies emphasized by anarchocommunists? Can bureaucracy of any kind coexist with libertarian institutions or are they inexorably opposed to each other?

Doubtless, these questions raise many problems of terminology that can easily obscure points of agreement between seemingly contrasting views. To some neo-Marxists who see centralization and decentralization merely as differences of degree, the word "centralization" may merely be an awkward way of denoting means for *coordinating* the decisions made by decentralized bodies. Marx, it is worth noting, greatly confused this distinction when he praised the Paris Commune as a "working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time."[4] In point of fact, the consolidation of "executive and legislative" functions in a single body was regressive. It simply identified the process of policy-making, a function that rightly should belong to the people in assembly, with the technical execution of these policies, a function that could be left to strictly administrative bodies subject to rotation, recall, limitations of tenure, and, wherever possible, selected by sortition. Accordingly, the melding of policy formation with administration placed the institutional emphasis of classical socialism on centralized bodies, indeed, by an ironical twist of historical events, bestowing the privilege of formulating policy on the "higher bodies" of socialist hierarchies and their execution precisely on the more popular "revolutionary committees" below.

Similarly, the concept of "representation" intermingled with "direct democracy" serves to obscure the distinction between popular institutions which should decide policy and the "representative" institutions which should merely execute them. In this connection, Rousseau's famous passage on the

4. Karl Marx, "The Civil War in France," *Selected Works*, Vol. II (Progress Publishers, 1969), p. 220.

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constitutive nature of a "people" in *The Social Contract* applies even more to the "mass society" of our times than the institutionally articulated one of his era. "Sovereignty, for the same reason as it makes it inalienable, cannot be represented," Rousseau declares; "it lies essentially in the general will and will does not admit of representation: it is either the same or the other; there is no intermediate possibility. The deputies of the people, therefore, are not and cannot be its representatives: they are merely its stewards, and can carry through no definitive acts. Every law the people has not ratified *in person* is null and void—is , in fact, not a law. The people of England regards itself as free: but it is grossly mistaken: it is free only during the election of members of parliament. As soon as they are elected, slavery overtakes it, and it is nothing." However problematical Rousseau's concept of "general will" may be, quite aside from his archaic concept of "law," the premises that underly it cannot be evaded: ". . . the moment a people allows itself to be represented, it is no longer free: *it no longer exists.*"[5]

It is precisely in terms of a "general will" more libertarian and individuated than any conceived by Rousseau that reveals the workers' councils to be socially one-sided and potentially hierarchical. Councils may be popularly constituted but they are not *constitutive* of a "public sphere." As the locus of the decision-making process in society, they absorb within executive bodies the liberties that more appropriately belong to a clearly delineable body politic and thereby subvert institutions such as communes, cooperatives, and popular assemblies that indeed constitute a people and express a popular will. Councils, in effect, usurp the political subjectivity that should be shared by all in social forms that express the individual's claim to social sovereignty. That Bolshevisim recognized this possibility and later cynically exploited it is revealed by the emphasis Lenin placed on the factory as the social basis of the soviets.[6]

But the factory, far from being the strongest aspect of the "proletarian public sphere" is, in fact, its most vulnerable.[7] However much its social weight is reinforced by revolutionary shop committees and the most democratic forms of self-management, the factory is in no sense an autonomous social organism. On the contrary, it is a particularly dependent one that can only function—indeed, exist—in conjunction with other factories and sources of raw materials. The Bolsheviks were to astutely use this

5. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (Everyman Edition, 1959), pp. 94, 96, emphasis added. Rousseau's influence on Hannah Arendt is almost as great as Aristotle's. Compare these remarks with Arendt's in *On Revolution* (Viking Press, 1965), pp. 239-40.

6. Here, indeed, a "proletarian public sphere," to use Oskar Negt's phrase, was acknowledged and hypostasized—not as a truly democratic arena, but as the locus for a "proletarian public" that could be strategically deployed against the great mass of "unreliable" peasants whose villages comprised the authentic "public sphere" of revolutionary Russia.

7. The myth still persists among council communists, many neo-Marxists, and particularly anarchosyndicalists that "workers control" of the economy is equivalent to workers' control of society. All theoretical considerations aside, the ease with which the CNT was outmaneuvered by the bourgeois state, despite its massive control of the Catalan economy in 1936-37, should have dispelled such simple economistic notions of power a generation ago.

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very limitation of the factory to centralize the "proletarian public sphere" to a point where they were to remove the last vestigial remains of proletarian democracy: first, by employing the soviets to isolate the factory from its place in the local community; then, by shifting power from the community to the nation in the form of national congresses of soviets. The use of soviets to interlink the proletariat from factory to factory across the entire breadth of Russia, literally amputating it as a social stratum from any comprehensible roots in specific localities where it could function effectively, served to hopelessly delimit its powers and to rigorously centralize it. In the immense national congresses of soviets staged annually during the revolutionary years, the Russian proletariat had lost all power over the soviets even before the authority of the congresses had been completely usurped by the Bolshevik Party.[8]

Quite likely, the centralization of the proletariat could have been achieved by the Bolsheviks in any case, without manipulating the soviet hierarchy. The very *class* nature of the proletariat, its existence as a creature of a national division of labor and its highly particularistic interests that rarely rise to the level of a general interest, belie Marx's claims for its universality and its historic role as a revolutionary agent. These attributes, which hindsight clearly reveals today, explain the failure of all classical "proletarian revolutions" in the past. Neither the Paris Commune, which was really fought out by the last remnants of the traditional French *sans culottes*, nor the Spanish revolution, which was fought out by workers with rural roots, are exceptions. Indeed, Social Democracy and Leninism in all its varieties used this particularistic interest with great effect against broader revolutionary tendencies in society as witness Ebert's shrewd manipulation of the German *Räte*, Stalin's infamous "Lenin Levy," and more recently, the commanding influence of European communist and socialist parties over the working class today.[9]

What is significant in all of these issues is the way they are *integrated* by neo-Marxism into the very problematical premises of classical Marxism, thereby neutralizing them as the bases for a thoroughly new radical theory and practice. Perhaps the most striking examples of these incongruities can be culled from Marcuse's writings of the 1960s—a literature which juxtaposes traditional, shopworn interpretations of political reality with philosophical, esthetic, and psychoanalytic insights that, in themselves, clearly pave new

8. See my *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* (Ramparts Press, 1971), pp. 150-53.

9. Space does not make it possible to deal with the hierarchical nature of the factory structure and its impact on the formation of proletarian consciousness. If labor is the "steeling school" of the proletariat, as the young Marx was to emphasize, its locus, the factory, is a "school" based on "imperious obedience," as Engels was to add in later years—indeed, a "school" marked by the complete absence of "autonomy." See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Holy Family* (Progress Publisers, 1956), pp. 52-53; Frederick Engels, "On Authority" in Marx, Engels, Lenin, *Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism* (International Publishers, 1972), p. 102. I have explored this issue elsewhere, and in my forthcoming *Ecology of Freedom*, where I question the existence of the factory as a natural fact or technics that must persist "independently of all social organization" (Engels).

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theoretical ground. These incongruities cannot be dismissed as the blind-spots of an otherwise far-ranging mind. I must reluctantly insist that they impugn the integrity of the larger vision Marcuse was to advance, the extent to which it was fully thought out, and the political conclusions that followed from it.

It is not trivial to ask why a work like *An Essay on Liberation* that contrasted the need for a "moral radicalism" with the scientistic radicalism of Marxian orthodoxy; that called for a "passing from Marx to Fourier" and "from realism to surrealism"; that celebrated the "new sensibility" of the sixties counterculture for its sensuousness, playfulness, and the challenge it posed to the "*esprit de serieux* in the socialist camp"; that singled out the "aesthetic dimension" as a sort of guage for a free society"—indeed, that with all of this buoyant utopianism, could have casually included the observation that the "global dominion of corporate capitalism...keeps the socialist orbit on the defensive, all too costly not only in terms of military expenditures but also in the perpetuation of a repressive bureaucracy." Or claim that in Vietnam, Cuba, and China, "a revolution is being defended and driven forward which struggles (!) to eschew the bureaucratic administration of socialism." Or, still further, deals with the "Third World" as an "external proletariat" and its insurgent peasantry as a "rural proletariat" with the inevitable implication (stated more explicitly by Marcuse during a lecture at New York University a year earlier) that the apparent docility of the "internal proletariat" of the Euro-American "orbit" did not negate Marx's traditional theory of class struggle when capitalism is viewed as a global phenomenon[10]

One cannot afford to merely grimace at such distasteful Bolsheviks apologetics for the "socialist orbit" as a society "deformed" by a "repressive bureaucracy" because of capitalist encirclement. Nor can one regard it as an expression of the *Geist* of the time that Marcuse, a man thoroughly schooled in the history of the interwar Left, could mystify the Vietnamese, Cuban, and Chinese "revolutions" as anti-bureaucratic—certainly not without deliberately ignoring the Bolshevik legacy claimed by their leaders, the Stalinist structure of their parties, and the specious nature of the "revolutions" themselves.[11] Characteristically, when the chips are down, like many neo-Marxists, Marcuse falls on the side of centralization, delegated power,

10. Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (Beacon Press, 1969), pp. vii, viii, 22, 57, 64, 80, 85.

11. For nearly two generations, Marxists had debated the question of whether "repressive bureaucracies" within the "socialist orbit" (which certainly includes Vietnam, Cuba, and China) were merely "deformations" produced by capitalist encirclement or whether the "socialist orbit" itself constituted a historically new typology that required critique in its own right. The schizophrenic nature of Marcuse's vision was to find its most striking expression in *Counterrevolution and Revolt* where, incredibly, the "mass" Communist parties of Europe and their unions were placed on the "Left of Social Democracy" and, as a result of this meaningless "constellation," were described as "still a potentially revolutionary force." Such observations are not episodic errors in judgement; they reflect a preformed social outlook that is more basic than encomiums to "moral radicalism," "Fourier," "surrealism," and the "aesthetic dimension" as "a sort of gauge for a free society." Cf. Herbert Marcuse, *Counter-Revolution and Revolt* (Beacon Press, 1972), p. 41.

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councils, and authority, as against decentralization, direct democracy, popular assemblies, and spontaneity. Again, like his melding of "moral radicalism" with Bolshevik apologetics, he does not explore the conflicting logic of these concepts, but mystifies them with a libertarian rhetoric that conceals his orthodox Marxist foundations.[12] Accordingly, even as Marcuse exultantly praises the "rebels" of May-June 1968 for using "direct action" to transform the "indirect democracy of corporate capitalism into a direct democracy," his libertarian fervor is increasingly dispelled by the formulations which follow. "Direct action," and more pointedly, "direct democracy," vaporize into "elections and representation[that] no longer serve as institutions of domination."[13]

Not surprisingly, Marcuse is more at home with the "seminal achievements of...the 'councils' ('soviets,' *Räte*) as organizations of self-determination, self-government (or rather preparation for self government) in local popular assemblies." That *Räte* and "local popular assemblies" stand in contradiction to each other is not posed as an issue because the contradiction lacks intelligibility if one thinks of a free society in largely institutional or structural terms—which are the terms with which Marcuse operates on a political level. If his Freudo-Marxism reclaims the sovereignty of the ego, of play and the "aesthetic dimension" in daily life, it lacks any viable life-line to his notion of socialism as a "mass society." This dualism that divides Marcuse's anarchism on the personal plane from his Marxian pragmatics on the social must inevitably lead to the absorption of the personal by the social, of the "black flag" (to use his own metaphors) by the "red flag."[14]

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12. Occasionally, this rhetoric does violence to historical fact. For one who has lived through the Spanish Civil War era, for example, it is astonishing to read that the "international brigades"—a force Stalinist movements crassly employed for counterrevolutionary as well as military purposes—symbolized the "union of young intellectuals and workers." See Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation, op. cit.*, p. 17. Not only was the formulation maladroit thirty years after the war, but it grossly misled the ill-informed radical youth who revered Marcuse as their elder statesman. For my own part, I could cite many personal experiences where young people who read this passage in Marcuse's essay and viewed such repellent "documentaries" as *To Die in Madrid* had to be educated into the real facts about Spain, not to speak of such myths as the "libertarian" proclivities of Maoism and theory of an "external proletariat," a position that was later to become the keystone of Weatherman propaganda. We are reaping the harvest of such historical sloppiness, today, with an effluvium of romantic eulogies to the Rosenbergs and the Stalinist hacks of the 1930s—this, quite aside from a revival of Stalinism by young sectarians who have been schooled in the writings of Ho, Mao, and Fidel. Doubtless, to impute these trends to Marcuse's political sloppiness would be ridiculous. But that he contributed even passingly to the making of such myths rather than their ruthless demystification is not to be shrugged off as accidental and raises even larger issues about the premises of neo-Marxism as such.

13. This hopelessly feckless formula is groomed with such traditionally Marxian rhetoric as "genuinely free selection and election of candidates, revocability at the discretion of constituencies, and uncensored education and information." Even Lenin in *State and Revolution* dispensed more generous liberties than Marcuse. What links Lenin and Marcuse in a common belief is their shared view that "in a modern mass society, democracy, no matter in what form, is not conceivable without a system of representation." *Ibid.*, p. 69. To reduce this formula to its molecular constituents, Marcuse cannot envision socialism without a "mass society" anymore than Engels can envision socialism without factories.

14. *Ibid.*, p. viii. When he advances the slogan, "Spontaneity does not contradict authority," is it necessary to ask what he means by the word "authority?" Self-discipline, education, and

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The seeming schizophrenia of Marcuse's thought is not a personal trait but a *generic* one. Owing to Marcuse's own courage in venturing into social issues that neo-Marxists usually avoid—direct democracy, decentralization, representation, spontaneity, and liberatory social structures—he clearly reveals the extent to which these issues are intrinsically alien to Marxism and to socialism. To this list of issues, one may reasonably add ecology, urbanism, and more fundamentally, hierarchy, domination, and liberatory rationality.

What neo-Marxists have not candidly faced is the extent to which Marxism in *all* its forms is organically structured to respond to social changes that lend themselves to analyses of class relations, economic exploitation, industrial rationalization, political institutions, and mass constituencies. To the degree that social changes raise broader issues of hierarchy, domination, ecological dislocations, liberatory technologies, social forms based on face-to-face relations, and individual sovereignty, these issues must be "hydrolyzed" (if I may be permitted to use a biological analogy) into simpler, more "soluble" ingredients that render them accessible to Marxian categories. That such monumental social issues must be degraded so that they can be absorbed by Marxism raises the basic question of whether the theory can be perpetuated in its wholeness or whether it should not be fragmented and its more viable components absorbed into a much broader theory and practice that will eschew the very use of terms like "Marxism" and "socialism."[15]

Ultimately, a line will have to be drawn that, by definition, excludes the repeated "slippage" of libertarian concepts into authoritarian ones—the slippage of centralization into varying degrees of centralization, direct democracy into delegated power, libertarian institutions to the side of bureaucracy, and spontaneity into authority. Such a line, like a physical barrier, must irrevocably separate a clear *transparent* libertarian zone of theory and practice from the hybridized socialisms that tend to denature it. This zone must be marked by the transparency of its libertarian commitments and criteria; it must build its anti-authoritarian utopian, and revolutionary commitments into the very recognition it has of itself—in short, into the very way it defines itself. Given the intellectual opportunism that marks our era,

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wisdom, as I have argued elsewhere in advancing the notion of "informed spontaneity"—or obedience, submission, and surrogation of will? It is by no means clear that one can infer from Marcuse's Freudo-Marxism that the rights he acknowledges for the individual can be translated into social and institutional terms. The two are loosely bonded precisely because Marcuse sees no contradiction between his anarchism on the personal level and his Marxism on the social. Theory may permit this dichotomy to exist indefinitely as an exotic flower with a prickly stem, hence the success neo-Marxism enjoys as an academic project.

15. I cannot help but note that Freudo-Marxism itself is an unstable hybridization of subjective categories with the value-free "social science" Marx sought to bestow on socialism. Women's liberation, like ecology, urbanism, even "workers' control" and neighborhood sovereignty, must be grafted on to the Marxian corpus like alien theoretical transplants. Alas, the sutures barely hold the grafts to the main body. A veritable industry, maintained by a number of well-known "neo-Marxist" hacks, has been established to provide the necessary cosmetics for the disfiguring effects of this bizarre surgery. But behind it all, one invariably encounters the same Marxian outlook with its fixation on the proletariat ("external" or "internal," "old" or "new"), on economic data and power constellations.

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there is no way that a libertarian zone can retain its integrity and *transparency* without describing its parameters in terms that reveal every conceivable form of slippage from its ideals, at which point it must cease to *be* what it professes to be. I would hold that such a zone can only be denoted by the term "anarchocommunism," a term that denies the validity of all claims of domination by definition. Accordingly, to admit of domination is to cross the line that separates the libertarian zone from the socialist. Whoever eschews the term in the name of a revolutionary project that is theoretically more delectable and socially more popular remains unreliable in his or her commitment to libertarian goals as such—goals that must remain tentative insofar as they are not rooted in the fixity of consistently antiauthoritarian premises. Perhaps such a fixity of premises may be intellectually distasteful or socially impractical. These are legitimate questions that must be decided by discussion or personal conscience. But the very fixity of premises that define anarchocommunism as a consistently libertarian zone is the sole guarantee that a revolutionary project will not gradually slip back to forms of theory and practice that inherently lend themselves to opportunistic compromises.

Traditions and personalities must not be permitted to stand in the way of our self-understanding of the issues involved. One may charge a Proudhon for his philistinism, a Bakunin for his naiveté, a Kropotkin for his didacticism, a Durruti for his terrorism—and anarchist theory generally for its simplicity. Even if each such assessment were true, it would merely be episodic in the face of a social crisis so massive and a social response so opportunistic that we can no longer retain any revolutionary project without the most compelling moral imperatives. Existentially, our era allows for no commitment that falls short of the anarchocommunist project for liberation, certainly not without leading to the betrayal of humanity's potentiality for freedom.

In any case, neo-Marxism and "libertarian socialism" fail us in the content they impart to a liberated society. To mingle direct democracy with delegated power, to build a free society on the concept of a "mass society," to reduce hierarchy to class relations and domination to economic exploitation reveal a gross failure to understand the meaning of *society* as a realm of freedom. With the politicization of society by state institutions, the substitution of bureaucratic ties for human relations, the homogenization of social forms and personal relations, socialist theory too has lost its very sense of society as more than a vague "public sphere" subject to rational, albeit "humanistic," controls. In this wasteland of social forms, we are obliged to ask questions that would have been taken for granted in an earlier era. What constitutes a human community and a society based on self-management? What constitutes that classical self-acting agent we denote by the term "citizen"? To the extent that these questions are not adequately answered, concepts like direct democracy and self-management remain formal abstractions that can be hybridized and distorted without regard to any abiding criteria of social freedom. Ultimately, the answers we give to these questions determine the authenticity of our commitment to a free society.

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II

We have used words like "modernity" and "industrial" society to conceal a basic difference between capitalism and precapitalist societies. In whatever ways precapitalist societies differed from each other, they differed from capitalism in the fact that they were basically *organic*, richly articulated in forms and structures that were to be ultimately challenged and destroyed by bourgeois market relations. Even where the eye moves beyond the egalitarian world of the early human bands and clans, underlying all the bureaucratic and political formations that were to layer the surface of tribal, village, and guild-like societies were the extended families, tribal relations, village structures, guilds, and even neighborhood associations that retained a subterranean autonomy of their own. Marx was to address himself to the tenacity of these "sub-political" formations in his observations on the "small and extremely ancient" communities in India "that are based on the possession of land in common, on the blending of agriculture and handicrafts and on an unalterable division of labor, which serves as a fixed plan and basis for action whenever a new community is started."

The organic nature of these communities, which Marx was to emphasize even more strongly in the *Grundrisse*, is described in primarily economic terms, in economic categories that subtly degrade the human content of their associative implications and absorb them into the framework of the historical economism that vitiates Marxian anthropology. But their inner social power, their vitality as human impulses toward sociation, seeps through Marx's remarks nevertheless. "The law that regulates the division of labor in the community acts with the irresistible authority of a law of nature, while each individual craftsman, the smith, the carpenter and so on, conducts in his workshop all the operations of his handicraft in the traditional way, but independently, and without recognizing any authority. The simplicity of the productive organism in these self-sufficing communities which constantly reproduce themselves in the same form and, when accidentally destroyed, spring up again on the same spot and with the same name—this simplicity supplies the key to the riddle of the unchangeability of Asiatic societies, which is in such striking contrast with the constant dissolution and refounding of Asiatic states, and their never-ceasing changes of dynasty. The structure of the fundamental economic elements of society remain untouched by the storms which blow up in the cloudy regions of politics."[16]

One could wish for a discussion of this "riddle" in less reductionist economic categories, although the entire passage is a fascinating guide to Marx's methodology even when he moves beyond the sphere of bourgeois society. Whether Marx had a social philosophy of history or not, his treatment of history is intellectually unified by an economism that itself could pass for a philosophy of history. Kropotkin, whose associationist sensibility is much stronger than Marx's, points out that the early medieval city "could hardly be

16. Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. I (Vintage, 1977), pp. 477-78, 479.

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named a State as regards its internal organization, because the middle ages knew no more of the present centralization of functions than of the present territorial centralization. Each group had its share of sovereignty. The city was usually divided into four quarters, or into five to seven sections radiating from a center, each quarter or section roughly corresponding to a certain trade or profession which prevailed in it, but nevertheless containing inhabitants of different social positions and occupations—nobles, merchants, artisans, or even half-serfs; and each section or quarter constituted a quite independent agglomeration. In Venice, each island was an independent political community. It had its own organized trades, its own commerce in salt, its own jurisdiction and administration, its own forum; the nomination of a doge by the city changed nothing in the inner independence of the units. In Cologne, we see the inhabitants divided into...neighborhood guilds, which dated from the Franconian period," each of which had its own judge, jury, and local militia commander. Kropotkin quotes J. R. Green to the effect that in London, before the Conquest, social life was based on "a number of little groups scattered here and there over the area within the walls, each growing up with its own life and institutions, guilds, sokes, religious houses and the like, and only drawing together into a municipal union." "The medieval city thus appears as a double federation," Kropotkin concludes: "of all householders united into small territorial unions—the street, the parish, the section—and of individuals united by oaths into guilds according to their professions; the former being a product of the village-community origin of the city, while the second is a subsequent growth called to life by new conditions."[17]

The most striking feature of the capitalist market is its ability to unravel this highly textured social structure, to invade and divest earlier social forms of their complexity of human relations. Even as capitalism seems to amplify the autonomy and claims of the individual, it does so by attenuating the content and structure of society. As *Gemeinschaft* theorists like Buber have pointed out: "When we examine the capitalist society which has given birth to socialism, *as a society*, we see that it is a society inherently poor in structure

17. Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid* (Extending Horizons Books, 1955), pp. 179-80, 181. The patronizing attitude of many Marxists toward Kropotkin's work in this area and the cultivated oblivion they exhibit toward historical disputes that were waged between Marxists and anarchists over such widely ranging issues as the general strike and the importance of popular control of revolutionary institutions is evidence of an odious "partyness" that must be directly confronted wherever it exists. Are we to forget that Rosa Luxemburg in *Mass Strike, the Political Party and Trade Unions* grossly misrepresented the anarchist emphasis on the general strike after the 1905 revolution in Russia in order to make the general strike acceptable to Social Democracy? That Lenin was to engage in the same misrepresentation on the issue of popular control in *State and Revolution*? That in recent years Marxist writers, who have adduced the factory as a "school" for conditioning the proletariat into submission to union and party hierarchies have yet to acknowledge the anarchist literature that originally pointed to this problem? Much the same can be said around such issues as ecology, utopianism, and even gay and women's liberation. As long as neo-Marxists stake out a claim to concepts that are historically alien to their traditions in Marxism, they not only perpetuate the mystification of radical history, but exhibit a moral probity that is hardly better than that of the society they profess to oppose.

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and growing visibly poorer every day. By the structure of a society is to be understood its social content or community content: a society can be called structurally rich to the extent that it is built up of genuine societies, that is, local communes and trade communes and their step by step association. What Gierke says of the Co-operative Movement in the Middle Ages is true of every structurally rich society: it is 'marked by a tendency to expand and extend the unions, to produce larger associations over and above the smaller associations, confederations over and above individual unions, all-embracing confederations over and above particular confederations.' At whatever point we examine the structure of such a society we find the cell-tissue 'Society' everywhere, i.e., a living and life-giving collaboration, an essentially autonomous consociation of human beings, shaping and re-shaping itself from within. Society is naturally composed not of disparate individuals but of associative units and the associations between them."

The capitalist economy and the centralized state "peculiar to it" begin to hollow out this highly articulated social structure until the modern "individualizing process" ends up as an atomizing process, a process that divests the individual of the social substance indispensable to individuality itself. Although the old organic forms retain "their outer stability, for the most part," they become "hollow in sense and in spirit—a tissue of decay. Not merely what we call the 'masses' but the whole of society is in essence amorphous, unarticulated, poor in structure. Neither do those associations help which spring from the meeting of economic or spiritual interests—the strongest of which is the party: what there is of human intercourse in them is no longer a living thing, and the compensations for the lost community-forms we seek in them can be found in none. In the face of all this, which makes 'society' a contradiction in terms, the 'utopian' socialists have aspired more and more to a restructuring of society; not, as the Marxist critic thinks, in any romantic attempt to revive the stages of development that are over and done with, but rather in alliance with the decentralized counter-tendencies which can be perceived underlying all economic and social evolution, and in alliance with something that is slowly evolving in the human soul: the most intimate of all resistances—resistance to mass or collective loneliness."[18]

There are observations I have brought into the above remark by Buber—partly directly, partly by selective quotation—that are not properly integral to his outlook. Buber does not oppose state forms as such, a difference that mars his admiration for Kropotkin—only state forms "peculiar" to capitalism. Nor does he oppose a market society as such—only a bourgeois one. His discussion of "utopian" socialism is highly selective; it ignores "utopian" socialists like Saint-Simon who stand on a level below his own and others, like Fourier, who go far beyond him. Like a good Proudhonian, he seems oblivious to the possibility that "all-embracing confederations over and above particular confederations" could easily yield

18. Martin Buber, *Paths in Utopia* (Beacon Press, 1958), pp. 13-14.

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social hierarchies as domineering as ruling classes. But his emphasis on the "cell tissue 'Society' " provides a much-needed correction of social theories that focus primarily on the skeletal infrastructure of society, be it economic or institutional. By denuding society of virtually all its molecular substance, Marxian theory and modern sociology generally have been able to formulate many broad principles of social development; indeed, analyses of production relations, social relations, and historical "stages" of society lend themselves to more seductively elegant logical constructs than analyses of concrete, often highly particularized local associations. But these generalizations, valuable as they may be, are all too often achieved by defining social life in highly formalized and abstract terms. The "laws" and categories derived by creating formal typologies are often gained at the expense of insights that the molecular structures provide and the challenging conclusions they imply. Indeed, the attempt to cast society in essentially generic terms can easily provide ideological support for the "hollowing out" of associative units by capitalism and the state.[19] By rendering social thought blind to the significance of these units—villages, neighborhoods, cooperatives, and the like—Marxian and bourgeois sociology take for granted and even participate in the pre-emption of community by bureaucracy, associated individuals by privatized egos, the society by the state.

To state the issue more broadly, the buyer-seller relation of the market place, carried by the logic of the commodity relation to the point of a market society, literally simplifies social life to the level of the inorganic.[20] Capitalism is literally undoing the work of organic evolution. By creating vast urban agglomerations of concrete, metal, and glass, by turning soil into sand, by overriding and undermining highly complex ecosystems that yield local differences in the natural world—in short, by replacing a complex organic environment with a simplified inorganic one—market society is literally disassembling a biosphere that has supported humanity for countless

19. Historically, one of the most striking examples of this support must be placed directly at the doorstep of Marx himself. For Marx to have described capital as a "great civilizing influence" that not only reduces nature purely to an "object for men [*Menschen*]—"mankind" in the McLellan translation, "humankind" in the Nicolaus!—purely as an object of utility," but also as a force that drives beyond "all traditional, confined, complacent, encrusted satisfactions of present needs, and reproductions of old ways of life" must now be viewed as more closely akin to this ideological process than a form of naive nineteenth century evolutionism. (*Grundrisse*, Random House, p. 9, 410; the Nicolaus translation has been corrected to remove the fiction that Marx was a committed feminist in his terminology). These remarks by Marx must not be dismissed as a mere theoretical matter. Bitter conflicts within the Russian and Spanish revolutionary movements over opponents and supporters of the more desirable features of village society were to reflect conflicting attitudes toward Marx's encomiums to the "historially progressive" role of capitalism, particularly in its destruction of precapitalist formations. Isaiah Berlin, in his excellent introduction to Franco Venturi's *Roots of Revolution* (Frosset & Dunlap, 1960), has discussed this cleavage in the Russian revolutionary movements with great sympathy for the anarchistic Populists. I have dealt with the same issue in the Spanish revolutionary movements in my *Spanish Anarchists* (Free Life Editions, 1977).

20. I have pointed out elsewhere that ecologically, the most significant problem we face today is not merely environmental pollution but environmental simplification. See *Post-Scarcity Anarchism, op. cit.*, p. 65.

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millenia. In the course of replacing the complex ecological relations, on which all complex living things depend, for more elementary ones, capitalism is returning the biosphere to a stage where it will be able to support only simpler forms of life. If this great reversal of the evolutionary process continues, it is by no means fanciful to suppose that the preconditions for more complex forms of life will be irreparably destroyed and the earth will become incapable of supporting humanity itself.

This process of simplification, however, is by no means confined to ecology; it is also a social phenomenon, as sweeping in its implications for human history as it is for natural history. If the competitive nexus of market society, based on the maxim "grow or die," must literally simplify the organic world, so too must the reduction of all social relations to exchange relations literally simplify the social world. Divested of any content but the brute relations of buying and selling, of homogenized, mass-produced objects that are created and consumed for their own sake, social form itself undergoes the attenuation of institutions based on mutual aid, solidarity, vocational affiliations, creative endeavor, even love and friendship. The "cell tissue 'Society' " is thus reduced to the monadic ego; the extended family to the nuclear family and finally to disassociated sexual partners who enjoy neither the responsibilities of commitment nor emotional affinities but live in the vacuum of estranged intercourse and the insecurities of passionless indifference.

Indeed, the logic of market society is the market *qua* society: the emergence of objects, of commodities, as the materialization of *all* social relations. No longer are we simply confronted with the "fetishization" of commodities or the alienation of labor, but rather with the erosion of consociation as such, the reduction of people to the very isolated objects they produce and consume. Capitalism, in dissolving virtually every viable form of community association, installs the isolated ego as its nuclear social form, just as clans, families, *poleis*, guilds, and neighborhoods once comprised the nuclear social forms of precapitalist society.

Thus two basic trends within capitalism converge to produce a common crisis: the simplification of the natural world and the simplification of the social and psychological, a sweeping "undoing" of natural and social evolution from richly organic, complex relations into homogenized, inorganic ones. The problems of ecology, society, and psychology, in effect, become unified as a common devolution of diversity into simplicity, of variety into homogeneity, of the organic into the inorganic. At the risk of anticipating more fully developed observations in the pages that follow, I cannot emphasize too strongly that the great Enlightenment drama of human development which Marx was to incorporate into the bases of his own social outlook—notably, humanity's progressive domination of organic nature as the preconditions for humanity's complete socialization and freedom from the biological realm—actually yields the "domination" of humanity by inorganic nature in the form of an increasingly simplified society, psyche, and external

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nature. Humanity, far from achieving its emancipation and control over nature, falls increasingly into "subjugation" to less organic ecological, social, and psychic forces. It is not organic nature which now "dominates" humanity but "inorganic," not the biotic but the physical, not the ecological but the mechanical.

Social regression on this scale imparts a new function to bureaucracy. Under capitalism, today, bureaucratic institutions are not merely systems of social control; they are literally institutional substitutes for social form. They comprise the skeletal framework of a society that, as Greek social thought would have emphasized, edges on inherent disorder.[21] However much market society may advance productive forces, it takes its historical revenge not only in the rationalization it inflicts on society, but the destruction it inflicts on the highly articulated social relations that once provided the springboard for a viable social opposition. The most disturbing feature of modern bureaucracy is not merely the coercion, regimentation, and control it imposes on society, but the extent to which it is literally *constitutive* of modern society: the extent to which it validates itself as the realm of "order" against the chaos of social dissolution. Just as the ancient city—its temples, gardens, political institutions, and well-cultivated environs—represented human order as against the ever-menacing encroachment of natural "disorder," so bureaucracy emerges as the structural sinews and bones that sustain the dissolving, decaying flesh of market society. Precapitalist societies have resisted or simply side-stepped bureaucratic formations that were imposed upon them with the highly articulated internal life they developed on their own or inherited from the past. Capitalist society becomes *bureaucratized* to its very marrow precisely because the market can never provide society with an internal life of its own.

This fact expresses both the possibilities of bureaucracy as a social infrastructure and its historical limits. The very anonymity of bureaucracy reveals the authority of the system over personality, of the social framework over its "personnel." The ease with which Stalinism reproduced itself structurally as a grotesque persistence of bureaus amidst a chronic execution of bureaucrats is testimony to a total depersonalization of social control today—the appalling *asociality* that bourgeois society finally achieves in its mythic "socialization" of humanity. Together with the "denaturing" of humanity, capitalism creates a synthetic society so completely divested of organic attributes that its social relations are literally mineralized into objects. The bureaucrat is truly faceless because he or she has no protoplasmic existence; the depraved notion that administrative decision-making can be taken over by computers and public espression by electronic media—a notion seriously considered as a step in the direction of "direct democracy" by theoretically sophisticated radical groups like the French Situationists, not only zany science-fiction "utopians"—increasingly renders

21. See Joel Whitebrook, "The Problem of Pre-capitalist Economics," in *Dialectical Anthropology*, forthcoming.

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the flesh-and-blood bureaucrat and citizen an anachronism. As in Platonic metaphysics, the immediate world of perception becomes the imperfect, transient "copy" of an *edios* that transcends the underterrain and chaotic materiality of life itself. If bureaucracy represents the culmination of social order, capitalism totally belies the historical destiny Marx imputed to it as the means for universalizing humanity and providing it with the means for controlling its own destiny. Bureaucracy, as a system perfected to the point of voiceless depersonalization, now represents a *mute society* even more divested of self-articulation than "mute nature." In the structureless void to which capitalism has reduced society, the public realm literally becomes a public *space*, public only in the sense that it is occupied by interlinking bureaus. Flow diagrams and systems theory become the language of corporate entities that, lacking even the presence of the lusty "robber barons," consist of objects moving through depersonalized agencies. The homeostasis of these corporate entities depends not upon personal judgements but the corrective power of deviations. Contemporary language unerringly calls this "feedback," "input," and "output," not discourse, dialogue or judgment.

There is a moral that must be drawn from this massive regression to the inorganic: capitalism has not performed the historical function of "disembedding" humanity from nature. Over and beyond the haunting power of archaic tradition on the present is an "embeddedness in nature" that found expression in the organic consociation of human beings: initially, a consociation expressed in clannic ties, a sexual division of labor, the eminence of the elders, and a "nature idolatry" that slowly cemented human ties into ever-expansive forms of association. Doubtless, these were primarily biological facts, not social; organic, not synthetic. But the price humanity has paid for its socialization—for the "denaturalization" of blood groups into territorial units, tribes into towns, and the stranger into citizenship—has taken the form of capitalism, a rapacious society that has carried through human socialization by "tearing down all the barriers which hem in the development of the forces of production, the expansion of needs, the all-sided development of production, and the exploitation and exchange of natural and material forces."[22]

If, as Shapiro has argued, for Marx capitalism creates the conditions for removing human beings from their "immersion" in archaic traditions and in nature by "(1) setting abstract labor free as a force of production through the process in which labor creates its own conditions, and (2) freeing individuals from their identification with particular social roles allotted to them by the social division of labor...," it is no less true that capitalism removes them from organic nature only to "re-embed" them in *inorganic* nature.[23] It removes them from a "concrete labor" that knows nature in all its wealth of forms and immerses them in an abstract labor that knows only abstract

22. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, (Random House, 1973), p. 410.
23. Jeremy J. Shapiro, "The Slime of History" in *On Critical Theory, op, cit.*, pp. 147-48.

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matter; it removes them from their personal identification with a social division of labor by divesting them of the very subjective apparatus required for personality. Although capitalism may seem to free labor as a force of production in the organic sphere, it enslaves it to the inorganic, transporting it from the world of living materiality to the world of dead materiality. Capitalism may have freed humanity from the archaic "idolatry of nature," but it did so only by committing humanity to the modern idolatry of quantity. In Marxism itself, it may well be that the present releases the hold of the archaic past on itself, but the present holds the past captive to fictive conceptions of history that divest human consociation of all human attributes but "interest," "productive powers," domination, and the values of the bourgeois Enlightenment conceived as a project of rationalization and control.

III

Today, any meaningful project for the reconstruction of a revolutionary theory and practice must take its point of departure from three basic premises: the reconstitution of the "cell tissue 'Society' " in the *physical* sense of the term, as a body politic that is bereft of the institutions of delegated authority; the abolition of domination in all its forms—not merely economic exploitation; and the obvious precondition for the latter achievement, the abolition of hierarchy in all its forms—not merely social classes. The reductionist attitude of Marxism that defines a body politic in the ambiguous terms of a "public sphere," of domination in terms of economic exploitation, and hierarchy in terms of economic classes, masks and dissolves the differences between these concepts. That we could easily achieve a "public sphere" that professes to be free of class rule and economic exploitation, yet is riddled by patriarchy, bureaucracy, and a system of ruled and ruler based on professional, ethnic, and age differences, is painfully evident if we are to judge from the experiences of the "socialist orbit." To speak to the needs of an organic society—the formation of an authentic body politic and a socially active citizenry—is to restore society as genuine "cell tissue." Society, in effect, must become a body politic in the literal sense that the citizen must be *physically* in control of the social process, a living *presence* in the formation and execution of social policy.

Rousseau is only too accurate in recognizing that a body politic, divested of *embodiment* as a citizen assembly, is the negation of a people. The term "people" has no meaning if it lacks the institutional structure for exhibiting its physical presence and imparting to that presence a decisive social meaning—if it cannot assemble to debate, formulate, and decide the policies that shape social life. To the degree that the formulation of these policies is removed by mediated and delegated institutions from the face-to-face decision-making process of the people in assembly, to that degree is the people subverted as the only authentic constitutive force of social life and

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society, vested in the sovereignty of the few, reduced to an abstraction, an unpeopled "public sphere" or a mere "public space." Underlying every enterprise for the dissolution of the body politic into the faceless sovereignty of delegated authority is the hidden belief in an "elect" that is alone endowed with the capacity to rule and command. Ultimately, this view amounts to a denial of the human potentiality for self-management, to the spark within *every* individual to achieve the powers of social wisdom that a privileged few claim for themselves. That circumstances, be they resolved into the denial of education, free time, access to culture, and even an enlightened familial background, not to speak of material and occupational circumstances, have concealed this spark from the "masses" themselves is no argument for the fact that social life, particularly as it concerns the individual, could be otherwise.

Delegated authority, in effect, not only negates a people but the claims of selfhood that are underlying to the notion of popular self-management. As I have emphasized elsewhere, a society that professes to be based on self-management is inconceivable without self-activity. Indeed, revolution can be defined as the most advanced form of self-activity, as direct action raised to a level where the land, the factories, indeed the very streets, are directly taken over by the autonomous people. In the absence of this level of activity, social consciousness remains mere *mass* consciousness that can easily be manipulated by hierarchies. Delegated authority vitiates the individuation of the "masses" into self-conscious beings who can take direct, unmediated control of society into their own hands. It denies not only the constitution of a "public sphere" into a body politic, but the individual into a social agent—into a "citizen" in the Athenian sense of the term. Contrary to Sartre's imagery of the "slime," today we live under the tyranny of a present that is often more oppressive than the past. Our social "models" for freedom have been the Russian Revolution and the so-called "revolutions" of the Third World,.of the councils and shop committees that are so seductive to many neo-Marxists as forms of social administration. I would join M. I. Finley in seriously asking if we should not try to recover the more fascinating example of the Athenian polis which, despite its many shortcomings, provides more expansive *institutional* examples for a liberated society than any we are familiar with today. That Athenian democracy was based on a "sovereign Assembly. . .open to every citizen" and convened at least forty times a year; that it was consciously "amateurish" and anti-bureaucratic, managed by a rotating council of 500 whose chairmen were selected by lot for only a single day, a council itself constituted by sortition as well as election—these features together with its astonishing court system, militia, and extensive use of the lot hardly require elaboration.[24] Athenian amateurism rested on a regard for selfhood that Platonistic readings of the *polis* tend to de-emphasize. To the degree that Hellenic democratic theory found written expression, it may well have been in the concepts of Protogoras that are handed down to us through Plato's patently biased dialogue. Free men possess *politike techne*, the "art of

24. M.I. Finley, *Democracy: Ancient and Modern* (Rutgers Univ. Press, 1973), p. 18.

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political judgement," as Finley translates the phrase, a judgement that uniquely defines humanity as a cooperative species, possessed of *philia* (shall we say "solidarity" rather than the more conventional translation of the word as "friendship"?) and *dike* (justice). But beyond these traits they possess a sense of community that by *nature* destines them to live in a *polis*. These traits of a free citizen, taken together, constitute a controlled *selfhood*, what we call "self-control," that renders community life or *Koinonia* possible. "Neither the sovereign Assembly, with its unlimited right of participation, nor the popular jury-courts nor the selection of officials by lot nor ostracism could have prevented either chaos on the one hand or tyranny on the other had there not been self-control among enough of the citizen-body to contain its behaviour within bounds," observes Finley. Moreover, this self-control was an active form of selfhood, not the *apathia* or absence of feeling we so often associate with contemporary citizenship within a depersonalized formal system of "rights" and "duties." "There was a tradition (Aristotle, *Constitution of Athens*, 8.5) that in his legislation early in the sixth century B.C. Solon passed the following law, specifically aimed against apathy: 'When there is civil war in the city, anyone who does not take up arms on one side or the other shall be deprived of civil rights and of all share in the affairs of government.' The authenticity of the law is doubtful, but not the sentiment. Pericles expressed it, in the same Funeral Oration in which he noted that poverty is no bar, by saying (Thucydides, 2.40.3): 'Any man may at the same time look after his own affairs and those of the state.... We consider anyone who does not share in the life of the citizen not as minding his own business but as useless.' "[25]

It is ironical that we must turn to John Stuart Mill, rather than his socialist contemporaries, for an insightful evaluation of how direct participation in social life and the development of selfhood mutually reinforce each other to form the civic virtues and commitments of the citizen—that make active citizenship the highest expression of selfhood. The defects of Athenian democracy notwithstanding, the practices of the dicastery and popular assemblages, Mill was to observe, "raised the intellectual standard of an average Athenian citizen far beyond anything of which there is yet an example in any other mass of men, ancient or modern." The Athenian citizen was obliged "to weigh interests not his own; to be guided, in case of conflicting claims, by another rule than his private partialities; to apply, at every turn, principles and maxims which have for their reason of existence the common good...." He accordingly found himself associated "in the same work with minds more familiarized than his own with these ideas and operations" which supplied "reason to his understanding and stimulation to his feeling for the general interest."[26]

Hannah Arendt was to formulate this educative process—an integral feature of what the Greeks called *paideia*, the spiritual *forming* of the

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

26. John Stuart Mill, *considerations on Representative Government* (World Classics Edition, 1948), pp. 196-98.

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individual—as an "enlarged mentality" that renders authentic judgement possible.[27] The *polis* was not only an end but a means that made political practice ("participation" is a feeble term) a mode of self-formation. At this level, a people not merely arrives at a "general interest" but begins to transcend "interest" as such. "Interest," a term nourished by the bourgeois enlightenment that surfaces throughout the Marxian literature as "class interest" and in neo-Marxian literature as "knowledge interest," is replaced by the possibility of mutuality and consociation based on the Hellenic concept of *philia* or, in the Christian tradition, by *agape*.

The young Hegel, despite his scorn for a Christian equality that saw the slave as "the brother of his owner," was deeply rooted in the millenarian ideal of a new human union and the Joachimite vision of an era of fulfillment. In this trinitarian vision, love, as embodied in the Holy Spirit, transcends the faith that marked the era of the Son and the law that marked the era of the Father. For the young Hegel, "True love, or love proper, exists only between living beings *who are alike in power* and thus in one another's eyes living beings from every point of view"—and, by the same token, to achieve this penultimate recognition of the "living beings" who are loved, they must be alike in power. *Agape* as conceived in Hegel's eschatological vision, no longer knows the drive of "interest"; indeed, it "deprives man's opposite of all foreign character, and discovers life itself without any further defect." This is not a world in which gray is painted on gray. "In love the separate does still remain, but as something united and no longer as something separate; life [in the subject] senses life [in the object]." Indeed, love supplants law and one may justifiably ask if, in this era when all living beings are alike in power, there is any need for mediation and the state[28]

Assemblage attains its fullness in a world where "interest" yields to *philia* and *agape*, where judgement emerges from the self-formative intercourse and spiritual education of an "enlarged mentality." Endowed with this mentality, "even when I shun all company or am completely isolated while forming an opinion, I am not simply together only with myself in the solitude of philosophic thought," Arendt observes; "I remain in this world of mutual interdependence where I can make myself the representative of everyone else. To be sure, I can refuse to do this and form an opinion that takes only my own interest, or the interests of the group to which I belong, into account.... But the very quality of an opinion as of a judgement depends upon its degree of impartiality."[29] "Impartiality" must be taken literally if Arendt's point is to

27. Hannah Arendt, "Truth and Politics" in *Philosophy, Politics and Society*, edited by Peter Laslett and W.G. Runciman (Blackwell & Co., 1967), p. 115.

28. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Early Theological Writings* (University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 304-5. Emphasis added. To my knowledge, this implicit anarchism in the young Hegel has been ignored by neo-Marxists and its Joachimite roots examined only casually, if at all. The considerable attention which has been given to labor and language in Hegel's early writings has often slighted their utopian dimension and has turned Hegel not merely into a "precursor" of Marxism but also one of its victims.

29. Hannah Arendt, "Truth and Politics," *op. cit.*, p. 115.

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have meaning—as a condition that rises above the "partial," or one-sided, and the "partiality" of a predetermined commitment. The emergence of a "general interest" is, in effect, the abolition of the "partiality" of a self rooted in "interest" and in a one-sided society.

It is a truism that "opinion" and judgement so formed have material preconditions and a historical background that has received sufficient emphasis not to require discussion here. Arendt's "enlarged mentality" must emerge from a terrain that is materially incompatible with the formation of "class interest" and its ideological expression as "class consciousness." But once these material preconditions are emphasized, we must add that a "proletarian public sphere" is an anachronism because the proletariat *as* proletariat, as the fictive expression of a *public* sphere, is an "interest" that opposes the universalization and abolition of "interest" and the formation of a public. It is not accidental that Marx follows in the wake of bourgeois reality by denuding the proletariat of the social and personal forms without which it cannot develop its public existence as part of a universalized humanity. Marx's writings "hollow out" the proletariat as ruthlessly as capitalism hollows out the "cell tissue 'Society.' " Just as abstract labor confronts abstract matter, so abstract classes confront each other in conflict of "interests" that exists beyond their will or even their clear comprehension. That Marx conceives the proletariat as a category of political economy—as the "owner" of labor power, the object of exploitation by the bourgeoisie, and a creature of the factory system—reflects and *ideologizes* its actual one-sided condition under capitalism as a "productive force," not as a *revolutionary* force. Marx leaves us in no doubt about this conception. As the class that is most completely dehumanized, the proletariat transcends its dehumanized condition and comes to embody the human totality "through urgent, no longer disguisable, absolutely imperative *need*. . . ." Accordingly: "The question is not what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat at the moment *considers* as its aim. The question is *what the proletariat is*, and what, consequent on that *being*, it will be compelled to do."[30] (The emphasis throughout is Marx's and provides a telling commentary on his de-subjectivization of the proletariat.) I will leave aside the rationale that this formula provides for an elitist organization. For the present, it is important to note that Marx, following the tradition of classical bourgeois political economy, totally objectifies the proletariat and removes it as a true subject. The revolt of the proletariat, even its humanization, ceases to be a *human* phenomenon; rather, it becomes a function of inexorable economic laws and "imperative need." The essence of the proletariat *as* proletariat is its non-humanity, its creature nature as the product of "absolutely imperative need"—of brute "interest." Its subjectivity falls within the category of harsh necessity, explicable in terms of economic law. The psychology of the proletariat, in effect, is political economy.

The real proletariat resists this reduction of its subjectivity to the product of need and lives increasingly within the realm of *desire*, of the *possibility* to

30. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Holy Family, op. cit.*, pp. 52-53.

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become other than it is. Concretely, the worker resists the work ethic because it has become irrational in view of the possibilities for a non-hierarchical society. The worker, in this sense, transcends creature nature and increasingly becomes a subject, not an object; a non-proletarian, not a proletarian. *Desire*, not merely need, *possibility*, not merely necessity, enter into self-formation and self-activity. The worker begins to shed the status of *worker*ness, existence as mere "being," and becomes increasingly available to the development of an "enlarged mentality."

As the *human* essence of the proletariat begins to replace its factory essence, the worker can now be reached as easily outside the factory as in it. Concretely, the worker's aspect as a woman or man, as a parent, as an urban dweller, as a youth or elderly person, as a victim of environmental decay, as a dreamer (the list is nearly endless), comes increasingly to the foreground. The factory walls become permeable to the development of an "enlarged mentality" to the degree that personal and broadly social concerns *begin to compete with the worker's "proletarian" concerns and values.* No "workers' group" can become truly revolutionary unless it deals with the individual worker's human aspirations, unless it helps to de-alienate the worker's personal milieu and begins to transcend the worker's factory milieu. It is doubtful if, in the event of truly revolutionary change, that workers will *want* to control production and bask in the glories of an economy based on "worker control." They will probably want to alter production, indeed sever society's technical commitment to the factory as such. This kind of working class will become revolutionary not *in spite* of itself but *because* of itself, literally as a result of its awakening selfhood.[31]

For Aristotle, "man is by nature a political animal; and so even when men have no need of assistance from each other they nonetheless desire to live together." For although they share a "common interest" in a good life, "they also come together and maintain the political partnership [actually *politiken koinonian*—M. B.] for the sake of life merely. . . ." For Marx, "Men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion or anything else. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to *produce* their means of subsistence, a step which is conditioned by their physical organization. By producing their means of subsistence men are indirectly producing their actual material conditions."[32]

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31. These arguments already appeared in my "Listen, Marxist!" of April, 1969. They have since been appropriated by neo-Marxists like Stanley Aronowitz in *False Promises* to add a legitimation precisely to a "proletarian consciousness" and interest they were meant to challenge. I adduce this type of distortion primarily to guard the reader against "neo-Marxist" tendencies that attach basically alien ideas to the withering conceptual framework of Marxism—not to say something new but to preserve something old with ideological formaldehyde—to the detriment of any intellectual growth that the distinctons are designed to foster. If Marx's work can be rescued for our time, it will be by dealing with it as an invaluable part of the development of ideas, not as *pastiche* that is legitimated as a "method" or continually "updated" by concepts that come from an alien zone.

32. Aristotle, *Politics* (Loeb Classical Library, 1932), 1278b15-30 and Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (International Publishers, 1947), p. 7.

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Between these two definitions of "man" lie more than two thousand years not only of human "progress" in mastery over nature, but social regression in the denuding of society. The degradation of *koinonia* into the division of labor and of *philia* into class solidarity, finally of the self into an endless fount of egotism and needs is a historical *fact* that cannot be ignored. But it is also an *ideology* that cannot be hypostasized and mystified as "revolutionary." If we are not merely at the end of capitalism but at the end of "civilization" as Fourier might have observed—of hierarchy and dominatin—it is not enough to speak any longer of class and exploitation but rather of *rank as such* at the most molecular levels of human consociation.

It was the young Hegel, again, who most clearly formulated the place of wisdom as *paideia*, specifically in the fruitful interchange of teacher and taught rather than leader and led—a *paideia* that informs the development of a revolutionary culture or "movement" as much as it does a revolutionary sensibility. That age, experience, and personal talents may confer wisdom is no reason that it should confer power. Hegel's distinction between Jesus and Socrates draws this point out unerringly on its authentic social terrain. The Christian apostles were mere acolytes. "Lacking any store of spiritual energy of their own," Hegel observes, "they had found the basis of their conviction about the teachings of Jesus principally in their friendship with him and dependence on him. They had not attained truth and freedom by their own exertions; only by laborious learning had they acquired a dim sense of them and certain formulas about them. Their ambition was to keep this doctrine faithfully and to transmit it faithfully to others without any addition, without letting it acquire any variations in detail by working on it themselves."

By contrast, Socrates' friends from "their youth up...had developed their powers in many directions. They had absorbed that democratic spirit which gives an individual a greater measure of independence and makes it impossible for any tolerably good head to depend wholly and absolutely on one person. In their state it was worthwhile to have a political interest, and an interest of that kind can never be sacrificed. Most of them had already been pupils of other philosophers and other teachers. They loved Socrates because of his virtue and his philosophy, not virtue and his philosophy because of him. Just as Socrates had fought for his native land, had fulfilled all the duties of a free citizen as a brave soldier in war and a just judge in peace, so too all his friends were something more than mere inactive philosophers, than mere pupils of Socrates."[33]

The *polis*, with its emphasis on freedom and activity, stands opposed to the congregation with its emphasis on reverence and quietism. Hegel touches precisely on the differing social contexts that produce pupils in Greece and disciples in Judea, teachers and leaders, the democratic *koinonia* of the *polis* and the hierarchical infrastructure of the Church. In the tension between these two extremes, different senses of selfhood emerge: the controlled self formed by the light of spirit, reason, and solidarity and the controlled self

33. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Early Theological Writings, op. cit.*, p. 81, 82.

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formed by the whiplash of a rationalized society, dogma, and fragmentation. In reality, there is no longer room for an intermediate ground, whether in the revolutionary movement or in society. The history of this century has been poisoned by the endless "gains" and "mediations" that threaten to become the bonfires of society itself—the "improvements" that have been brought into the service of a domination so ubiquitous that it brings the self into complicity with its own enslavement. Nearly forty years ago, Horkheimer could have written that "*The revolutionary movement negatively reflects the situation which it is attacking.*"[34] Today these words seem tame. The "revolutionary" movement—as the Left calls itself—*positively supports the situation it professes to attack.* The mass party is the precondition for the existence of a mass society, the political face of its institutional bureaucracy. The entire future of the Left diverges on whether it seeks to recover a body politic—the *koinonia* of a face-to-face citizenry—or whether, in the name of the "pragmatic," the "expedient," and the appropriate "mediations" it will foster the ever-greater rationalization of the society with the rhetoric of progress, planning, reform—and even "revolution."

Beyond the intramural disputes of the Left lie the larger social issues of historical recovery and social advance. The municipal tradition, however faint, persists in western society today as an American tradition that may well speak to an American revolutionary movement with greater meaning than the European emphasis on centralization. "The continued growth of the New England town by division of the central nucleus into new cells, having an independent life of their own, recalled the earlier pattern of Greece," Lewis Mumford has observed. "But the New England towns added a new feature that has never been sufficiently appreciated nor as widely copied as it deserved: the township. The township is a political organization which encloses a group of towns, villages, hamlets, along with the open country area that surrounds them: it performs the functions of local government, including the provision of schools and the care of local roads, without accepting the long-established division between town and country."

Mumford's lament that the failure of "both the Federal and the State Constitutions" to incorporate the township as the basic unit of American democracy "was one of the tragic oversights of post-revolutionary political development" is an understatement. The "post-revolutionary political development" of the early republic was largely counterrevolutionary and the township, particularly its town meetings, were deliberately excluded precisely because they gave "concrete organs" to an "abstract political system of democracy. . . ."[35] As Merril Jensen has pointed out in a fascinating account of that very period, "the nature of city government came in for heated discussion." Town meetings, whether legal or informal, "had been a focal point of revolutionary activity." The anti-democratic reaction that set in after the American Revolution was marked by efforts to do away with town

34. Max Horkheimer, "The Authoritarian State," *Telos*, n. 15, (Spring 1973), p. 6.
35. Lewis Mumford, *The City in History* (Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961), p. 332.

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meeting governments that had spread well beyond New England to the mid-Atlantic and Southern states. Attempts by conservative elements were made to establish a "corporate form [of municipal government] whereby the towns could be governed by mayors and councils" elected from urban wards. Judging from New Jersey, the merchants "backed incorporation consistently in the efforts to escape town meetings." Such efforts were successful not only in cities and towns of that state but also in Charleston, New Haven, and eventually even Boston. Jensen, addressing himself to the incorporated form of municipal government and restricted suffrage that replaced the more democratic assembly form of the revolutionaries of 1776 in Philadelphia, expresses a judgement that could apply to all the successful efforts in behalf of municipal incorporation following the revolution: "The counter-revolution in Philadelphia was complete."[36]

Here, then, lies a history and a liberatory tradition that awaits full and conscious expression as a demand for human scale, local popular control, decentralization, and face-to-face democracy both within the revolutionary movement and within society. In turning the notion of the "people" against its bourgeois utopian origins, this liberatory tradition recovers and transcends a vision for which the material premises were established by bourgeois society itself. A new "revolutionary subject" exists in the social vacuum left by society and the centralized power at its summits.[37] The system turns everyone against it—be it the conservationist or the small struggling entrepreneur, the worker or the intellectual, women, blacks, aged, or the seemingly privileged suburbanite. The denuding of the individual from "brothers" and "sisters" into "citizens" and finally "taxpayers" expresses the common lot of every individual who is burdened by a terrifying sense of powerlessness that is so easily mistaken for apathy. Bureaucracy can never blanket this open, unoccupied social domain. This domain can eventually be filled by neighborhood assemblies, cooperatives, popular societies, and affinity groups that are spawned by an endless array of social ills—above all, *decentralized* groups that form a counterweight and a radicalizing potential to the massive centralization and concentration of social power in an era of state capitalism.

Socialism, inspired by the imagery of the Robespierrist Committee of Public Safety, offers no promist of affecting (indeed, of comprehending) this new social development, so congenial to the American social tradition. The simplification of the "social problem" into issues like the restoration of local power, the increasing hatred of bureaucratic control, the silent resistance to manipulation on the everyday level of life holds the only promise of a new "revolutionary subject" on which resistance and eventually revolution can be based. It is to these issues that revolutionary theory must address itself, and it is to a re-institutionalization of a conscious body politic that revolutionary practice must direct its efforts.

36. Merril Jensen, *The New Nation* (New York, 1950), pp. 118-120.
37. See my "Toward a Vision of the Urban Future" in *Urban Affairs Annual Review* (Sage Publications, 1978) in press.

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THEN AND NOW*

by Claude Lefort

If we take 1968 as a vantage point, certain ideological displacements become evident. When comparing the decade before with the one after the great tumult—which, although not a revolution, still briefly shook French society—one notices a change in the intellectual climate. It is not simply that actors have aged and sometimes changed their costumes, nor that others have come on the scene: the play itself is no longer the same. Since in the following pages I will argue that there has been a renaissance in political thought, it might be useful to begin by listing the most significant ideas that have emerged during the last 50 years and to explain why they have to be interpreted differently.

What have been the main intellectual tendencies since the early 1960s? The most prominent one was scientism, or what has come to be called the "human sciences." The ideal of objectivity, the concern for exactness, and the principle of the observer's neutrality have been proclaimed for some time, but it was never possible to define the frontiers of the new kingdoms and fully exorcize philosophy. Yet, this was precisely what was celebrated as a "new scientific spirit." Borrowed from Bachelard, this was the formula that circulated everywhere. Originally developed to interpret the history of the so-called exact sciences and to detect similar changes in various disciplines, the formula eventually became an order. Thus, for example, we find epistemology venerated by sociologists who incorporated it into the search for the royal road to knowledge. Was this going too far? One need only look at the demands of the students in 1968 who sought a new kind of sociology. They eagerly awaited a new master: epistemology. They repeated *ad nauseam*: there is no legitimate knowledge without a prior definition of the conditions of knowledge. It was as if the means had at last been found to submit knowledge to a set of operations or, as Hegel put it, the final movement of the dialectic could allow one to slip behind the back of consciousness in order to see it at work.

This scientism spread over many heterogeneous undertakings. At first there was structuralism, taking full advantage of mass production and consumption. No similar development can be found in the past. Structuralism unleashed a veritable flood of books, articles, and debates. The university's full effort contributed to this flood, while the little people—the students—had to keep chewing the product endlessly. In the wake of structuralism, linguistics began to rise, quickly reaching the summit. Avid for knowledge, students in 1968 asked for a linguist. The model of language

*This is the introductory statement to *Libre*, a new French journal whose general aims are very close to those of *Telos*. Translated from the French by Dick Howard and into English by Jean Cohen, Patricia Tummons, Mark Poster and Andrew Arato.

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extended from ethnology to literature. Although game theories and information theories remained confined to small circles of specialists, their echoes were heard and contributed to an exalted faith in the mathematization of the social sciences. In other quarters, behaviorism in all its variants succeeded in invading psychology and provided another form of certainty. Elsewhere, relational analysis, imported directly from the United States, was applied to the study of power networks and, despite a badly camouflaged empiricism, pretended to be a new theoretical achievement. These were all heterogeneous and occasionally conflicting enterprises. Yet, they could co-exist since they all shared the same fascination with formalism.

In order to judge the work in the various fields, we would have to map out the different areas from which there is a transposition of the models and methods adopted in sociology, ethnology, political science and psychology—right down to history and literature. Those principles that emerge out of a rigorous and fruitful process would have to be distinguished patiently from what is only the transposition of pseudo-theories. Furthermore, it would be necessary to give credit to whatever of value may come out of it, despite the trap of scientism. But this is not our purpose. We are concerned only with the sudden and widespread diffusion of a certain notion of what is knowable.

The knowable becomes the object of knowledge. A tautology? Not at all. What is knowable is susceptible to systematization. Thus, the object of knowledge has the virtue of self-sufficiency. Those suspect complicities that develop in the search for meaning are eliminated in the confusion of psychological, sociological and historical dimensions. Furthermore, little fortresses are built around each field by cultivating technical problems shielded from political questions posed by hostile outside neighbors. For example, one dare not ask those who study kinship systems what is so unique about primitive society. Although they cannot avoid using terms such as "savage" or "primitive" society, these are only phantoms against which they measure a series of actual or possible objects. One dare not ask those who study organizations in industrial societies about new relations between power, law and knowledge or whether such relations serve new modes of domination, i.e., bureaucracy. If we did pose such questions, our scientist would think that we were trying to remind them of the existence of "global society"—a term they use only in reference to irrelevant questions and illusions. They know with glorious certainty that there is only the science of the particular.

But it would be wrong to conclude only that the new adventures in the human sciences abandon totality and reality. Indeed, this sacrifice is the very thing that gives birth to scientific knowledge. What is erased is not the real as such, but the very horizon of the real. What is dissolved is what Merleau-Ponty called social "flesh"—the "flesh" of history. It would be misleading, however, to see this as simply a final phase of objectivism. For, wherever objectivism goes to its ultimate consequences (in a form well beyond Husserl's worst nightmares), it becomes unrecognizable. The effort to exorcise the subjective dimension generates a division and a conflict that shakes the status

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of both the object and the subject. In other words, efforts to exorcise the subjective from the objective dimension generate a dangerous problem concerning the very division between them. But the newcomers have hidden that division under the veil of structure. They have adjusted the knower and the known so that the former appears imprinted in the latter—not in the way that the law is imprinted on the world, but in the way blueprints reflect subsequent constructions. In refusing to go all the way with a universal determinism (even though the father of structuralism occasionally indulged in recycling these crude beliefs), *the newcomers have created a void:* there is no society, no history, no man, no intellectual work—all of them have become different names for nothing. This void allows the 'elements' welded together in the constrained space of a structure to form a tight block: a little marvel that holds together without nature's or God's help. Thus, the object is self-sufficient, unhindered even by the discourse that pretended to glorify it—or rather, it has become an object of discourse.

During the same period, other pretentious voices were added to the modernist chorus and they claimed scientism for Marxism—indeed, they claimed that privilege only for Marxism. Granted, they did not silence all opposition, but there can be no mistake: they were the ones who received the attention of the "in" crowd.

Althusserianism moved to the center of the stage. A remarkable little event: in various forms, scientism had always dominated the Marxist scene but had never before developed as a philosophical criticism. Thus, invoked in the service of doctrinal purity, epistemology was charged with the restoration of the decrepit foundations of orthodoxy and structuralism was mobilized to transcribe into a rigorous language confused indications about the mode of production. Bachelard's "new scientific spirit" became identified with the Marxian revolution and that of mathematics and modern physics. The only difference was that the author of *Capital* alone appeared to have undergone a radical mutation. His task, one learns, was not simply to overthrow the foundations of the higherto accepted science. He created a whole new science from what had been only ideology, and carried out an exemplary process that succeeded beyond all expectations. Here, two things were going on at the same time: the carving out of the mode of production—a structure whose elements are determined by the given; and the carving out of the mode of knowledge—a theory in the form of a system whose pronouncements are also determined by the given.

The knife cut simultaneously into the "flesh" of intellectual work and into the "flesh" of social reality. The same cut did away with both. It would be wrong to stop here, to denounce structuralism's arbitrary contraposition of early and mature writings: that is a secondary question. What is decisive is the gesture that cuts in order to extract pronouncements meant to reveal the logic of the system. What is decisive is the project of substituting for intellectual labor not a similar effort referring to it—i.e., the process of interpreting—but a self-sufficient object of knowledge that makes reading

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Marx superfluous (or allows such a reading only within the limits of its "reproduction").

No matter what help one can derive from commentators, to read Marx is to question him (an effort that today is becoming increasingly difficult). This requires the acceptance of the indeterminacy that accompanies writing: the breaks in the work; the new beginnings in subsequent texts; the willingness to discover a thought being worked on by what it grasps: that one becomes drawn into it and ask once again the questions that made Marx speak—questions whose thematization is his own virtue and which are not concealed by his answers. And the liberty that is so gained increases with the very reading—a reading that leads readers to confront their own time as an object that must in turn be dealt with. That liberty grows from the liberty of others.

Today science saves us from this bizarre relation. There is nothing left to read. Once it is established that the very system determines what is said about it, nothing is left but to banish the indeterminate. The point is that the same "reason" decides to eliminate the idea of intellectual labor along with the idea of social reality. The theory of the mode of production is an obstacle. It prevents one from wandering in the labyrinth of intellectual labor, from experiencing the world, from being surprised by the new and from deciphering it. The theory of the mode of production turns Marx's ideas into a science, but it does so as if there were nothing either inside or outside the theory. History, which Marx continually mentioned, is converted into a reservoir of signs which reveal the structure only when properly ordered. Another clever division exists between this order and the array of events that lies beyond it, i.e., everything in the domain of contingency. If, for example, we consider the so-called socialist mode of production, everything that must be imputed to the vicissitudes of its early stages, to the actions of foreigners, or to the passion of individuals, lies in this domain of contingency. More generally, the transformations of capitalism, whether it is growing or decaying, are unimportant. The same goes for the formation of new classes and new ideologies, or the fact that new social relations have been developing over the last century, or that, as a result of a proletarian revolution, totalitarianism has come into being. None of these events count. They cannot count, for they have no status apart from the theory. The closure of the theory is such that one can never bring in facts to testify against the hypothesis. Strengthened by the Bachelardian maxim that facts are mute if they have not been produced by scientific operations, our scholarly Marxists (who, need we recall, are also robust Stalinists) relegate to empiricism the knowledge of the world. This is their own manner of *creating the void* to be filled by the structure. Through their example one can see that the operation is not in good faith, and the kind of scientific fraud it conceals. Thus, the system designed to preserve through the displacement of structures (with each mode of production determining the hierarchy of its manifestations) depends on concepts long since nailed down by the old functionalist Marxism: the concepts of politics, law and religion, for example. The result is that even

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after the old schemas of so-called economic causality are rejected, determinism reappears under the same guises.

If this were but the most recent manifestation of Marxist dogmatism, it would not be worth wasting time on it. But it *is* worth noting how the language of the new sciences justifies a more sophisticated version of ideology. The effectiveness of this approach depends on the critique of old illusions. The idea of a *real* border between knowledge and reality is denounced, along with scientism—i.e., the naive faith in a universe ruled by observable laws, the faith in a history-as-such evolving through a chain of causes and effects. But the border is now erased in order to put everything back within the limits of the object of knowledge, to adjust it to the operations of its production and to divorce knowledge from the irregularities of experience.

A new version of ideology... What determines its movement is the victory of a viewpoint that neutralizes history, disguises all difference, and discourages challenge. In this sense, any and all tricks are valid, indeed necessary. Ideological change follows historical change.

When scientific and philosophical thought leads to the abandonment of both the idea of a reality separate from the knowledge of it and the idea of a subject constituting reality through his activity, then ideology restores certainty by simply inverting the assertion of reality and subjectivity. It denies the existence of both, and outlines networks of operations whose validity is measured by coherence alone. On the one hand, proof that it is impossible to determine the origin and the end of knowledge would generate a whole new relation to the idea of change. It would open the world up as something *external*—and not just in fact, but in principle as well. It would welcome whatever happens or exists that is not already known. Similarly, it would open up to what is *internal*, to a thought that is always just about to be thought, that lacks a foundation or a final location. On the other hand, it is precisely this test or challenge that ideology avoids. In order to erase boundaries between *outside* and *inside*, it proclaims that there is neither a beginning nor an ending.

The new ideology submerges within an extremely artificial thesis all questions of consciousness, language, history, politics, or man—all the questions that arose during the last century as a result of a rupture with the classical conceptions of representation, expression, time, the categories of humanism and the ideal of a knowledge bearing its own foundation. Under the pretense of casting out old idols, what is eliminated is thought, history, politics—in a nutshell, the very human dimension of experience. Philosophy itself is relegated to the realm of fantasy. Finally, since they have become a mockery, words such as *experience, sense* and *truth* disappear from the modern vocabulary.

What then have we heard since May 1968? On the one hand, we hear the same things, the same pretentious claim to scientificity. After 1968, the influence of scientism seems to have grown and achieved recognition in new domains. Of course, one must distinguish between American-inspired

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formalist psychology and sociology (which benefit purely and simply from the re-establishment of order after having served as the target of student opposition) and epistemology, clothed with a revolutionary aura and spreading in the wake of structuralism to textology, semiology, linguistic and mathematical models in psychoanalysis. What is remarkable is the appearance of a different type of concern that seems to challenge the established modes of scientific inquiry, while merely shifting them to a new ideological dimension.

We need only indicate a few signs of the change. It is not just the old scientific positivism or philosophical humanism that bears the brunt of the attack. The critique strikes at the very ideal of science, of the human sciences as such—surely a legitimate attack—but it does not stop there. It proclaims the destruction of the very value of knowledge. The term "theory" itself becomes suspect. So much the better, one might say, if it were merely a question of denouncing the myth of grand theory or of the closure of a system of knowledge. But it is the very idea of truth that ends up being closed off—the peculiar need of thought to relate to itself through the test of socio-historical interpretation is what is discarded as mystification. Thus, this critique of Marxism is not merely that, which would be welcome, but it turns out to be an attempt to eliminate Marx's very intention. All that remains of Marx's efforts is the condemnation of capitalism, the bourgeoisie, and money. Similarly, the critique of the epigones of psychoanalysis (especially of the sorry oedipologists of the May revolt) turns out to be not only a critique of Freud, which would also be welcome, but an attempt to eliminate his work. In this case, we can easily understand the reasons: what work shows more clearly than Freud's the labor of a thought in which interpretation and self-interpretation are inextricable? At most, the new ideologists concede only the discovery of desire and repression. One could go on. Generally speaking, the tendency is to extrapolate from connections in society between positions of power and positions of knowledge that knowledge is power. Since power is reduced to coercion, knowledge is identified with repression. This ushers in the restoration of desire—a desire that is not called "natural" since it would threaten to refer to a pole that has already been erased. It is a restoration, which takes place by means of scholarly words in books, articles and public speeches. It can be taught and can even remain associated with a good tradition (Reich even more than Marcuse).

If ideology resides in the devices it develops to eliminate the danger of indeterminacy in things—or, what is the same thing, to stifle questioning—then it has a promising career. Consider ethnology: there are few fields where research is riskier or generates more ambiguities. Ethnology attempts to locate in "primitive societies" the primitive stage in the evolution of humanity by presenting these societies as an otherness that rules out any connection between them and us. Furthermore, it forbids the development of a viewpoint bridging the differences. A new approach is introduced that reduces the ethnologist's position to that of the colonizer by associating the

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violence of domination with the violence of knowledge. Or consider psychiatry: again, there are few fields where research entails more intellectual risks and is more likely to become a tool of the established order. But here, too, a new approach displaces the old one. It converts knowledge as such—not simply its use or institution—into a police discipline. In fact, the case of psychiatry is the most instructive, for it leaves no doubt as to the general thesis that repression creates its own object. This thesis can be extended indefinitely: just as madness does not exist by itself, neither are childhood or femininity anything but social products. In short, the hard-won recognition that the madman, the child, the student, the woman or the primitive is a social construction—something that leaves much to think about—is replaced by the claim either that the particular does not exist or (what is the same thing) that there are only quantitative differences.

This general approach develops along conceptual lines that uphold or renew a modern version of objectivism. For a time a mechanical model became fashionable (the stuff about the desiring machine) pretending to displace the structure. The idea of energy was mobilized to represent a self-contained circulation of fluxes. Disjunctions and conjunctions of these fluxes through a continual coding and decoding (whose principles are uncritically transposed from other scientific fields) were supposed to generate interconnected organic complexes. Thus, this new device constitutes the little self-sufficient marvel that simultaneously dissolves the notion of thought and of what it spontaneously thinks. Having nothing outside of itself, the desiring machine thus also contains what enables us to conceive it.

Even more instructive is the case of the relational theory of power, which, by contraposing repression and desire, challenges social reality in order to better pulverize it and do away with the idea that social existence is what is at stake in politics. In this sense, the occlusion of institutions (especially the state), which was the mainspring of American functionalist analysis, is recycled under a revolutionary banner. Institutions are replaced by networks of relations whose terms, unequally distributed, behave according to their forces, form coalitions and separate in various strategies adapted to local situations.

The problematic of repression and desire could not get by without at least a reference to the law under which power is exercised. Thus, by dividing two antagonistic poles, it allowed the revelation of the stakes involved. The relational theory, however, creates this void in order to fill it with an ensemble of operations whose agents turn out to be the simple points where the various networks cross, i.e., where there are no agents. All persons find themselves within techniques that convert them into controllers or controlled and, as persons, they are decomposed into an indefinite number of excitations resulting in power or resistance.

Occasionally, institutions such as the state or even social classes reappear, as they must. But they do so only as names: simple indices of power relation or series of points transmitting actions or reactions. Under the banner of

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nominalism, artificiality has no limits. Repression no longer creates its object: the notion of the repressed becomes illusory. Knowledge is no longer at the service of power: the notion of a repressing master is also illusory. Power relations are conceived in terms of techniques. Power does not generate its own object in order to dominate; it is produced in the very production of the object. The technical product becomes its own goal: the *science* that it uses is nothing but the exercise of power itself—or else power is nothing but the byproduct of knowledge, which is concerned with completing its own operations by defining itself as a discipline.

The resources of this modern approach are inexhaustible. This is not because ideology derives anything from its own foundation. Marx already said this. But ideology must endlessly invent: it must simulate invention in order to transcribe the new that would reveal its emptiness. Finally, new representations do not necessarily imply the abolition of older ones. Ideology uses any and every resource: the concepts of mode of production, structure, machine, technique and even power. This does not mean that ideologies only co-exist. The amazing fact is that one and the same person articulates several of them in the same breath, playing the entire gamut with equal conviction.

Why is May '68 a turning point? Why does that event allow us to uncover a certain change—or, to use the happy formulation of our rulers, a change within continuity? The previous allusions to the function of ideology already prefigure the reason. We noted that what took place at the time was not a revolution. Nor did a counter-revolution follow. The name 'challenge' was correctly chosen to designate what shook French society. The term meant much less than insurrection or uprising, and at the same time it meant a bit more, without defining what this was. It is hardly necessary to explain why it was less than a revolution: in spite of the demonstrators' invasion of the streets, the violent confrontations with the police, the strikes, the occasional detention of representatives of authority and the occupations of public establishments, there was no armed struggle. There was not even an attempt to destroy state power or a defined object of mass mobilization. And yet it was a little more, since that indeterminate challenge involved all aspects of social life. It spread to all institutions—businesses as well as universities and hospitals, the family as well as the church. It was a little more in the sense that it implied a loosening of established rules, beliefs, customs and the authorities that are their natural guardians. It denied the legitimacy of ruling institutions without sparing even the parties and unions that ordinarily monopolize the opposition. It challenged predominant models of production, consumption, information, as well as those of teaching, urbanization, and socialization. In vain did the militants of the various sects try to direct the May Movement toward revolutionary goals; in vain did they finally indict it as a failed revolution. Most of the challengers were not obsessed with the overthrow of the state or with the nationalization of the means of production. Instead, they participated in an *experience of freedom* that they had never thought possible in a variety of places and social fields. This freedom, however, was conquered

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in and against modern society. It was conquered where the traditional means of coercion are gradually being phased out, where the exercise of power tends increasingly to hide under the so-called objective constraints of the organization, where pleasure is sold from day to day under the illusion of novelty. On the other hand, the requirements of the plan forbid individual or collective initiative wherever they are now possible.

Thus, beyond the excitement of May and the cult of old illusions lays a critique and a demand. The critique questioned the "organizational viewpoint," which orders our world by parcelling out social life and labelling individuals—a whole system of disciplines and abilities regulating and programming knowledge. Thus, it attacked the predominant model of science, which legitimates the organization. It did so by contraposing the "subject" to bureaucratic anonymity and the "collective" to the atomization of individuals, by articulating a "primitive" communication, and by appropriating a controlled space. In this sense, the demand and the critique were political. Afterward, it was called a "cultural revolution" as a result of the failure to understand what politics implies. In this case, it was meant to hide the fact that all social relations were challenged by a new division between the state and civil society, and a growing fusion between the viewpoint of the state and the viewpoint of ubiquitous social organizations.

As some of us pointed out at the time, the May movement opened a *breach* in the technocratic-bourgeois order. The depth of this breach was such that, however brief its duration, it shook the bureaucracy of the so-called Left, which, in at least one of its wings, is the potential home of totalitarianism. But that breach was subsequently only plastered over. To evaluate fully the extent of restoration of the pre-May order and the extent to which changes have been lasting, one would have to examine the government strategy, the evolution of legislation (the emphasis on certain repressive instruments and the de-emphasis of others) and the changes that have taken place in everyday life. But this imagery of "plastering over a breach" should not prevent us from locating the effects of the May movement, which are far from having been erased. It is impossible not to see a heritage of May in the style of social struggles in recent years, in the spread of the demand for self-management or in the endemic strikes undermining the university. Moreover, the proliferation of challenges under the guise of women's liberation, the legalization of homosexuality, the denunciation of class injustice, prison reforms, or ecology—all share in opposing further homogenization of society and its technical rationalization.

Here we are interested only in a very specific replastering of ideology and in a scholarly thought that remains scholarly even when it rejects science. This scholarly thought replasters by following the contours of the breach. In other words, all the bursts of the challenge have been exploited to recompose a "new order," or an order that now hides under the new. There is nothing more remarkable than the feverish agitation of our intelligentsia at the service of the new. Since the little stage has become a big one and each innovation is

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amplified by the information industry (we live in the age of the "hi-fi"), not a month or a week goes by without the public being informed that a revolution has broken out, that a whole tradition has just collapsed, and that one must start from scratch. Moreover, since the cult of the new is a collective enterprise, there is not a single official who does not profess admiring amazement in learning of the latest miracle of his colleagues. The revolution of the concept has thus become the garrulous scion, the shark heavy with the hope of '68. But it is one that serves its function well. Actually, the themes of rupture, overthrow, the radicality of the beginning and the sectioning into *multiple* structures, machines or networks of power, are echoes of the loosening of the rein of organization—the explosion of a challenge in *various* places. At the same time—and here is something worth considering—these ideas are in conflict with the dominant social discourse: that difficult to circumscribe, subject-less discourse formed in the framework of elites and propagated by the press, radio and television so that it gradually becomes the masses' discourse.

How can one fail to notice that this discourse no longer carries the old bourgeois ideology? If the intellectual vanguard has rejected the ideal of a knowledge explaining its own foundation and the ideal of a knowledge of the totality, of a universal subject as well as the notion of laws imprinted in reality and of natural norms of the evolution of humanity, an even broader change has taken place not in the silence of social practice, but in the commentary that is interlaced with it and which contributes to determining it. There, one already finds a new occlusion of social and historical experience.

Bourgeois ideology stood above its object. Since it was certain of the difference between the necessary and the contingent, the changing and the eternal, it described reality through transcendental ideas. It could differentiate between nature and culture, civilization and barbarism, humanity and sub-humanity, as well as the normal and the abnormal, good and evil, true and false. As a legislator and a teacher, it introduced order and instruction. It made great institutions such as the family and the school, the enterprise as well as the state, into so many kingdoms based on law and conceived for the good of their subjects. At the same time, it provided the image of the authority figure—the father, the master, the patron and the statesman—while fully spelling out the place of both the hierarchy as well as those who obey and serve it. Finally, it dealt with history: it articulated continuity and progress; it produced the past as a reference, to show the imprint of the work of past generations in the present; and it forecast the final benefits of evolution in the future. This was bourgeois ideology. Yet, on closer analysis, even those who attacked it and sought to overthrow it did not escape its framework: socialist ideology was no less scientific, ethical, legislative and pedagogical.

Today, elaborations of social reality only become effective by becoming buried in social reality. Of course, they can only attempt to do so. If they did not remain external to their object, they would lose the viewpoint that assures

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them a mastery over that object. But this externality is erased as much as possible. No new grand ideas, such as property, work, freedom, progress, society or the individual, are advocated. If they are, they have already been deserted by the believers. While the sources of the ideology remain hidden, the articulations it sought to produce are today undone. Generally speaking, both ideology and power become invisible. The dominant ideology is nourished by knowledge itself. But the tonality of the science is no longer the same. Bouvard and Pécuchet believed in science, they revered its mysteries like theologians revere the scripture; they investigated the order of things to deduce from it the principle of their lives. Their contemporary offspring no longer lift their eyes to the heaven of ideas but they apprehend things and other people scientifically. If there is a sophisticated science, there is also another type that is paradoxically lived as if it were natural: it is assimilated as a way of thinking and doing. It is here that knowledge enjoys a prestige which it never had previously. People relate to work through technology, to desire through sexology, to food through diets, to children through pedagogy, to nature through ecology and, in general, to their bodies, lives and others through a thousand little psychological and sociological models.

This state of affairs is supported by a fantastic project of intimidation that forces the multitude to submit to experts or, even better, to internalize them. Someone says: "I don't know how to read." Another says: "I don't know how to work," and another still. "I don't know how to make love or live without a method." The fetish of methodology is not an intellectuals' invention; one sees it already in everyday language. With its help, the distinction between the concept and its object disappears. The distinction between ideology articulated at the level of ideas and the object grasped externally becomes erased. Thus, ideology appears in the form of the object, and the object in the form of ideology. As a result, social divisions that separate people and that were periodically challenged, are now hidden. For example, we find ideology in the form of the organization of information that is welded with the organization itself. What is excluded is everything that could challenge these models by referring to the experience of disorder, conflict, power, exploitation, and the weight of new institutions that appear as if they were natural.

If this was only a discrepancy in bourgeois ideology, if the emphatic certainties that it postulated are falling apart, then there would be reason to rejoice. But that view is short-sighted. What has taken place is not a decline in ideology as such: only a change of rules. And whoever does not recognize this state of affairs participates in it.

On the other hand, to apprehend the new form of ideology as a general process of occlusion of today's social reality allows us to grasp social reality as political and historical. More strongly put: provided that one recognizes it, the very mode of occlusion is instructive. The attempt to erase social and historical boundaries in order to validate wholly artificial visions of networks of relations, systems of signs and fragmented structures, leads us to discover as

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political what appears as simple cultural facts. This leads us to study how our world is generated from a past whose vestiges linger on in institutions and mentalities, but whose form has decayed. What could be more paradoxical than this: the formidable expansion of the state to all sectors of everyday life, from industrial production to public health, has led to its absorption of considerable chunks of civil society and, at the same time, the formation of an ideology that makes power invisible by imprinting it in the organization or by pulverizing it in various networks.

And what can be said of the blindness toward totalitarianism? Under our very eyes has come into being a new social formation covering an immense part of the globe, where the state has completely absorbed civil society. Here an historical change is most easily recognizable. Everything suggests that we decipher the transformation of our own society by reference to the totalitarian model. It is not a question of identifying our society with totalitarianism, as the demagogues of the post-May period have done ("We have the Gulag right here"). Here, state power increasingly enters into contradiction with the democratic system, which requires the periodic challenging of the government, the separation of power, law and knowledge, and the differentiation of the norms operating in each area. The subordination of the economy, law, and culture to politics reveals the nature of contemporary social reality. It may not be an accident that one does not want to know about this state of affairs, and goes so far as to deride and challenge the idea of a general locus of power by looking at the spectacle of the Russian or Chinese experience.

Thus, everything leads to the questioning of the genesis of our own society with regard to that unprecedented event, which is the birth of totalitarianism. Again, it is not a matter of imagining a development of the state which would lead to the completion of despotism. But the myth of a united and homogeneous society without division and working as if it were entirely activated by a principle acting throughout it (thanks to the party) throws light on the problems of modern society. Is it an accident that totalitarianism demands and provides the means to decipher the conditions of its genesis? Is it a coincidence that the modernist approach carefully avoids reference to history and that this evasion is one of its major ideological components?

It is one and the same task to bring to light the political and the historical dimension. The political dimension does not designate either an ensemble of institutions *in* society or a network of relations. Yet, it poses the question of its identity and that of 'external reality,' i.e., the question of individuation and of access to a common framework. We hold onto the concept also because it leads to the recognition that the constitution of the social milieu depends on the division of power and on the social ensemble. This is not a division between two localizable terms, but rather indicates an externality of society to itself: i.e., a division which is not the opposite of unity, since it determines a *symbolic* place where all relations are formed. In this sense, we speak of a political *dimension* in order to make it clear that throughout social reality, no

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matter what institution we consider, there is internal division. What this means is the impossibility of a closure of social reality—which amounts to a factual determination of the terms and their relations.

We also speak of a political dimension in order to avoid the misunderstanding that would give politics a positivity analogous to economics (as if something could be gained by displacing the foundation of capital to the state), and in order to avoid the illusion that the reproduction of social relations could be directed by a prime mover. Such an error works well to maintain the image of society as a super-organization, as a great machine that is certain of its functioning and that continually increases the number of its operations. The corollary of this should not escape us: a refusal to know (or a desire to mask) the impotence of power to master its position, the impotence of the institution to become fixed in repetition. It is an unprecedented impotence which has grown since power began to appear both in society and as its principle: when the institution appeared at once to provide a framework to social relations and as the product of those relations.

To understand this and to decipher its results amounts to thinking about history. To analyze the contradictions underlying predominant models by seeing them as compromise solutions always in quest of adequacy and threatened by the unintended effects of one on the other is to understand the transformations of the modern state, the family, the school, the asylum or the prison, as well as those of law, pedagogy, psychiatry, medicine, philosophy or literature. To admit that these contradictions express the indeterminacy of social reality, the enigma that the origin of society poses to society, is to break with that repetitive and paranoid sociology (Marxist or para-Marxist), which constantly flattens social reality by reducing history to the perfecting of the power machine, the knowledge machine, or ideology. It would amount to understanding the distinction between what is historical and what is ideological.

This does not mean that the historical dimension must be rescued along with the political dimension in order to restore a theory of universal history. We reject the viewpoint that stands over and above the social totality as well as the vision of the becoming of humanity as a self-generating evolution or succession of "formations." We also reject the notion of a substance called "society." The term 'historical dimension' is advanced precisely in order to avoid the equivocation attached to the idea of history; in order to suggest that social reality can be understood only in time and, more precisely, as the apprehension in what arises in a sequence of replies to a sequence of questions. In other words, the intention at the center or at the *flesh* of our societies, the deciphering of their divisions and their representations, the questioning of what is a puzzle for them, cannot overlook their *institutions*, their genesis, their differentiation over time and the problems that it generates. Moreover, modern society cannot be placed into history like an actor's gestures and words are placed at the proper moment in the plot. Modern society must be known in its historicity, through events that are not

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simply constellations of accidents but which are shaped by modern society, thus revealing its relation to change.

We cannot limit within the present what the present demands that we think. But, we must add, nor can we limit it within the history where it takes form. For as soon as one returns to its genesis, that questioning must go beyond modern societies. It can only confront what is unique to them and deal with the problem of their specific historicity by reference to what is foreign. Such a questioning is unlimited. It derives just as much from an examination of 'primitive' communities ordered so to conjure away the risk of separating them from the state—as Clastres has shown—as from examining Athenian democracy, the caste society of India or the 'celestial bureaucracy' of old China. It thrives on the test of difference—of course, within the horizons of a world opened to difference.

And that questioning cannot be reduced to a formula. When it addresses societies without a state in the framework of ethnology, it questions, whether consciously or not, the ideal of the modern state; when it considers totalitarianism, it questions the idea of social relations that escape the all-powerful state, and which that state tries to destroy.

But what is an unlimited questioning if not a philosophical questioning? Many fear that label with good reason. They see in philosophy a discipline that pretends to stand above the others and exploit their materials in order to construct the Great Apparatus of knowledge. But we can leave that caricature to its critics, who derive from it the satisfaction of claiming scientificity for their own disciplines. We prefer rather to recall Merleau-Ponty's words to the effect that there is more philosophy in a great novel than in most treatises written under that name. He was right. We would not dream of defending philosophy as it is usually cultivated within university walls. Philosophy lives already in literature, at least for a reader able to be touched by an encounter with a novel. But philosophical questioning unfolds on other levels. We must be ready to study it in the works of ethnologists, historians, as well as in political reflection or psychoanalysis, in order to find it there, more alive than where it is supposed to be. In this manner, to pave again the way for philosophy is simply to fulfill a requirement of knowledge to go beyond the closures of the so-called human sciences. But in this sense, we should not be afraid to say that we are returning to a tradition. We do so only in the proper manner, and yet with the sense of a renewal. Today, that tradition is pictured as a great and evil ancestor, surrounded by a pack of dogs demanding the execution of the dead (there is no end to this re-killing of the latest philosophers, whether Hegel, Marx, or Husserl). There, too, it is a question of a logic that would be well worth demonstrating: the negation of the political dimension calls for the negation of history, and both require an exclusion. This should, after all, not be surprising if we recall that the idea of politics, history and philosophy were formed together, and that such an event had something to do with the birth of democracy.

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WHY DEMOCRACY?*

by Norberto Bobbio

A Very Old Theme Becomes New

I have been amazed by the breadth of the debate generated by my two articles [1] for at least two reasons. Of the two problems I raised—that of the existence or non-existence of a political theory in Marx's thought, and that of the existence of an alternative to the model of representative democracy—I considered the first to be the more provocative. Furthermore, I thought that whichever problem was discussed, there would be more dissent than consensus. Instead, it turned out that the problem which has provoked the greater response has been the second and my account has met more approval than disapproval (even though, for whoever receives it, a disapproval usually outweighs an approval). At any rate, I am quite happy to have been wrong: objectively, the second problem is more important than the first and no one can deny the historical importance of a tendential agreement of persons coming from different parts of the Italian left on such a fundamental question as that of the relation between democracy and socialism. I had posed straight-forwardly the problem of the Marxist theory of the state because I was annoyed by the amateurish Marxism raging in our universities (and not only in the universities!), and could not understand how any insight into the construction of a new state, both democratic and socialist, could be gained from the sparse (even if valuable) indications which Marx had gathered from what had occurred in the Paris Commune—a type of state (even calling it that) which had lasted only a few months, and had not had time to consolidate and hence to test the viability of its institutions. Of course, the real (and tremendous!) problem facing the European left is certainly not that of knowing more precisely what Marx said, but of devoting one's own work to the creation of a state apparatus which is both efficient and non-oppressive. Similarly, if the problem which I called "the abuse of the principle of authority" was more provocative, the more relevant problem was undoubtedly the other, i.e., concerning the relation between democracy and socialism.

A further cause for surprise could be that a very old subject has been treated as if it were a new subject. In the history of socialist doctrine, the conjunction of democracy and socialism is the subject of all subjects. It is the subject over which revisionists and anti-revisionists, Leninists and anti-Leninists, etc. originally clashed.[2] An explanation for this renewed

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*Translated by George R. Alkalay.

1. See my "Is There a Marxist Theory of the State?" and "Are There Alternatives to Representative Democracy?" in *Telos*, 35 (Spring 1978), pp. 5-30.

2. I myself had confronted it in the same terms in an article of a few years back, in the article entitled "Democrazia socialista?" and no one, I mean no one, noticed it.

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interest lies in the fact that, in recent years, the problem was an academic topic for intellectuals—a moment in the battle of ideas—whereas today it has become a political problem.[3] Nevertheless, the fact that it has become a political issue does not detract from the fact that it remains more than ever a theoretical subject since, hitherto, history has not witnessed any practical synthesis of democracy and socialism. Were I to write a history of the illusions of our age (I am thinking of something along the lines of Sorel's book on the illusions of progress), I would pause to present two of these illusions: the socialist illusion of democracies (even the more advanced ones) and the democratic illusion of Bolshevism (or Leninism). I speak of illusions because European social democracy, in its various versions, from the German to the Scandinavian, from that of the Second International to the Labourist one, has never doubted that through democracy socialism would gradually be reached; and because, from the other side, Lenin never dissociated socialism from democracy but always maintained that the dictatorship of the proletariat would be a more advanced form of democracy. And yet the cold and hard facts, the "hard lessons of history," have proven both wrong. So much so, that the dissociation of democracy and socialism is one of the most macroscopic phenomena of our day. Take, for example, today's German Social-Democratic Party and the Russian Communist Party. I do not think that there is anyone in the German Social-Democratic Party who seriously believes in the construction of a socialist society such as could have been conceived by a socialist of the last century. On the other hand, I do not think that there is anyone in the leadership of the Soviet Communist Party who really believes in the transformation of the Soviet political system into a democratic system.[4]

One could not imagine greater distance between movements which, historically, had postulated in their programs the inseparability of democracy and socialism—even if in different forms. The debate concerning revisionism which flared up at the end of the last century was still a debate within the same movement of thought; it was a debate between people such as Bernstein and Kautsky who shared the same cultural matrix. To give an example from our own country, even Gramsci and Mondolfo, who clashed over the interpretation of the Soviet revolution, shared the same cultural matrix. What do Brandt and Brezhnev now have in common? What sense would there be to a theoretical discussion on democracy and socialism between these two eminent representatives of the two "socialisms" of this last quarter century? History has gone to extremes and has dirempted the positions so much as to render them incompatible. In between has been nothing less than "social-fascism" in terms of which social democracy has been considered an

3. Evidence for this can be found in that a few phrases from my second article were inserted with manifest approval in the speech which Pietro Nenni delivered to the XL Congress of the Italian Socialist Party (March 4, 1976).

4. Those who protest, who assert that the Soviet political system is not democratic, are usually considered, and not only in the metaphorical sense of the word, madmen fit to be tied.

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enemy on a par with fascism; and the introduction of the category of totalitarianism, which served to place the same label on fascism and communism (even if in the Stalinist version), i.e., to set the historical category of "social-fascism" over against that of "communo-fascism." In short, the split between democracy and socialism has been so deep as to trigger, on one side, the accusation of fascism against social democracy for having betrayed socialism, and on the other, the accusation of totalitarianism (hence, indirectly, of fascism) against Stalinism for having betrayed democracy.

I make these obvious (but perhaps not too obvious) observations in order to explain the reasons why the very old problem of the conjunction of democracy and socialism is always current. The history of the last fifty years has not only provided us with any proof of the possibility of this conjunction but, if we want to be realistic, we must recognize that it has done everything to discourage us. We can no longer be as naive as our fathers who believed that democracy and socialism were destined to proceed *pari passu*. Thus, some said: "Let us develop democracy and we will have socialism;" while others rebutted: "Let us construct a socialist society, and democracy will be its logical outcome." This sort of discussion would be not only naive but fatuous.

Let Us Redefine Democracy

Thus, it is necessary to begin, with a bit of patience, to clarify the terms of the problem. The discussion following my articles convinced me that there is a great confusion, even among the experts, concerning the subject. Some believe that the concept of democracy is elastic: that it can be pushed and pulled as one likes. Since the beginning of time democracy has meant government by all or by many or by more as against government by one or by few or by less. In the history of political thought, what changes in regard to the concept of democracy is not its descriptive use but its prescriptive use, i.e., the value judgment which for some is positive, for others negative. I will return to the question of value judgments shortly. The traditional concept of democracy is obscured when government *of* the people is mistaken for government *for* the people. I must admit that I was very upset having recently read that this second meaning of the term democracy was used by Brezhnev in his speech to the XXV Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. To quote: "We can recall Lenin's words to the effect that everything is moral in our society which serves the interests of the construction of communism. On this premise, we can say that, for us, *everything* is democratic *which serves the interests of the people* and the interests of the Communist Party."[5]

The classical distinction between monarchy and republic goes back to Machiavelli and was based on an external criterion, such as the number of the governed, with the republic including aristocracy as much as democracy. This distinction was replaced by the distinction between democracy and autocracy (where autocracy includes monarchy as much as aristocracy), i.e., a distinction based on a less external criterion such as the different way in

5. Quoted from *Relazioni internazionali*, 11 (March 13, 1976), p. 258, italics added.

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which a legal order is created. The norms constituting a legal order can be created in two ways: either by those to whom the norms are directed (the autonomous way), or by persons other than those for whom they are intended (the heteronomous way). To the first way corresponds a democratic system, to the second an autocratic system.[6]

The distinction between democracy and autocracy can be similarly reached by the contraposition, used above all by political scientists, of power from below and power from above. When Gaetano Nosca wanted to distinguish various forms of government on the basis of the way in which the political classes organize their power, he resorted to the distinction between the forms of political organization in which "authority is transmitted from the top to the bottom of the political or social ladder" and those in which "it is delegated from the bottom to those who are on top, from the governors to the governed."[7] He termed the first "autocracy" and the second (having reserved the term "democratic" for another use) "liberal" (but there can be no doubt that the more accurate term would have been "democratic").[8]

No, the concept of democracy is not elastic. In its contraposition to autocracy it is a concept with precise contours. We could redefine it as follows: a system of power is "democratic" if the collective decisions, i.e., the decisions of interest to the whole collectivity, irrespective of size, are made by all the members comprising it. Once this definition is accepted, the procedural rules which I mentioned and which generated various objections and even some disgusted remarks, follow as a necessary consequence. I cannot see how one can do without them. The function of these rules is to permit the establishment in advance of what will have to be understood as the collective will. It is not enough to state that what is considered binding on all citizens is that law which all citizens deliberate to be so. Which citizens? All of them? All of them with equal weight? And since it is improbable that millions of persons will think in the same way, is it not necessary to establish a criterion whereby the opinion of some can prevail over that of others? It is sufficient to pose these questions to recognize the need and hence the validity of at least three of the rules which I listed in the preceding article to establish who has the right

6. For further details I would refer to a few pages, extremely lucid as always, in Kelsen, who takes care to specify (even if the astute reader has come to the same conclusion) that democracy and autocracy thus defined "do not really describe particular historical constitutions, but rather represent mere ideal types." See Kelsen, *Teoria Generale del Diritto e dello Stato* (Milan, 1952), p. 289.

7. See Gaetano Mosca, *Elementi di Scienza Politica* (Bari, 1953), Vol. II, p. 96.

8. For further information about the by now generalized historical usage of this contraposition, see the first few pages of W. Ullmann's *Principi di Governo e Politica nel Medioevo* (Bologna, 1972), pp. 14-15, devoted to the clarification of the two contraposed "ascendent and descendent" conceptions of power. The ascendent conception is that "according to which the power to create the law can be attributed to the community or the *populus*...which makes the law through a suitable organization." The descendent conception is that "according to which the governing authority and the legislative jurisdiction descend from a single supreme organ: power descends from the top to the bottom...such that any power encountered at the bottom of the pyramid is not, as is with the ascendent theory, an original power, but rather is a power derived from the top."

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to vote, i.e., to participate in the formation of the collective will; that everyone has the right to an equal vote; and what are to be understood as collective decisions, e.g., such as those made by a majority of votes. Of course, these rules are not beyond dispute. What is indisputable is that procedural rules are necessary (even if it be the simplest and most common rule: "All in favor raise their hands"), so that a decision can be reached when the decision makers are more than one.[9]

But this is not enough. Power is strictly tied to freedom. There is no power without freedom. The more power the more freedom. (Omnipotence coincides with absolute freedom.) As a result, whatever norm confers power must also provide that those upon whom the power is conferred be free to exercise it. In order for power to be effective, it is necessary that everyone be free to make, even if within certain limits, some choices (what remains of the voters' power if they are given only a single list of candidates?). Finally, since the criterion of majority rule is mechanical and external, it cannot serve as an absolute and definitive criterion but must permit periodical reviews of the results (which consist in the protection of the minority). From these considerations on the relation between freedom and power stem the other three rules: that according to which a democratic system must guarantee the existence of a plurality of organized political groups competing among themselves in order to aggregate the demands and transform them into collective decisions (this is the basis for today's much proclaimed principle of pluralism!); that according to which voters must be able to choose between different alternatives; and finally that according to which the minority must be guaranteed at least the right to become itself a majority in the periodic tests of consensus.

Of course, these rules are not the alpha and omega of political wisdom. The democratic method is a valuable good but it is not for all times and all places. There are periods of danger or of institutional crises (known to jurists as states of necessity or emergency—and for which political writers in all times invoke the principle of "*salus rei publicae suprema lex*") or even of violent transition from one order to another, or of a revolutionary break, in which the democratic procedure is not useful, and the rules of the game, if there are any, can go to hell. These are the periods during which, in classical theories, the dictator appears as the extraordinary magistrate for extraordinary situations. In the political theories from the French Revolution onward, it is the collective dictatorship of the Jacobins, or of the so-called Blanquism, up to Lenin's vanguard party, or else the demiurge, the saviour, Max Weber's charismatic leader. These are the moments which fall into the Weberian category of *statu nascenti*. Needless to say, in these situations the fundamental rule of democratic procedure, majority rule, is of no help. In

9. That things such as majority rule, which we today consider evident, are not indisputable, is demonstrated in a scholarly manner by that priceless book by Edoardo Ruffini Avondo, *Il Principio Maggioritario* (Milan, 1976).

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these situations collective will is formed through the demiurge, be it a man or a party and when called upon to decide, decides unanimously.

My aim was much more modest. It was to clarify in what sense "democracy" is to be understood when one speaks of the democratic road to socialism. Either we mean a procedure, i.e., a totality of rules for the formation of the collective will, or else I have no idea of what we are talking about. Those who raised their eyebrows when I spoke of formal democracy and reproached me for having a "technological" conception of democracy, are perfectly free to change the name as long as we are clear on the substance. So little do we understand each other that, when in a discussion with my students I asked whether a large poster in my classroom which read "All power to the students" referred to formal democracy or substantive democracy, my most intelligent interlocutor answered me that it was a matter of substantive democracy. I had to explain to him that whoever made that demand did not ask for certain benefits or services, e.g., fewer academic lectures and more seminars, but primarily participation in the power from which the satisfaction of certain interests could be expected. Hence, the demand concerned the manner or form for obtaining certain desired results, not directly the results, and was therefore a demand for formal democracy.

Why Is Democracy Desirable

With a bit of good will, we can even come to an understanding on the meaning of democracy in a context such as that of the present discussion in which "democracy" is contraposed to autocracy. As previously mentioned, what changes in political discourse over the centuries is not so much the meaning of the term as the value judgment concerning what is denoted by it. Today we are so used to giving an axiologically positive judgment to democracy that we forget that the majority of great political writers from antiquity to the present—starting from the two fathers of Western political thought, Plato and Aristotle—gave it an axiologically negative judgment. Even the princes of revolutionary thought never seriously believed that the democratic method was the best method for obtaining the ends which they proposed. Buonarroti (who laid the foundation) wrote: "In order to surmount these difficulties [the difficulties in instituting a new order] the force of everyone is needed. But this general force does not exist if it is not guided by a strong, consistent, enlightened and immutable will.... Many reforms are necessary before the general will can be expressed and recognized. Before these reforms are completed the people can neither perceive nore declare the general will. The people do not doubt the necessity of these reforms. But in the early stages of the revolution they would neither know how to ask for them nor approve them."[10]

Today, no one would dare make such an argument (which smacks among

10. In A. Galante Garrone, *Filippo Buonarroti e i Rivoluzionari dell'Ottocento* (Torino, 1951), pp. 495-496.

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other things of the doctrine—anything but revolutionary—of enlightened despotism). What happened? It happened that—precisely because of the development of the labor movement, the extension of the suffrage and the emergence of mass parties—the awareness of the necessity for change, for the reforms Buonarroti mentions in the quoted text, became widespread well beyond the few initiated or enlightened souls who took upon themselves the mission of guiding the people. It happened that, thanks to the faith in the democratic method, democracy itself has become ever more viable. Actually, it also happened that, where the democratic road was abandoned, the much awaited moment of the finally unfolded "general will" never arrived, and the enlightened souls, those who, in Buonarroti's words "are burning with love for equality," remained in power, even when they were no longer enlightened and had by then replaced their love for equality with an equally burning love for power. It should not be surprising that it became a commonplace that democracy is as easy to lose as it is difficult to regain. It is unnecessary to add that, in countries such as Italy, the experience of fascism contributed to the rapid and lasting diffusion of the *communis opinio* favorable to the democratic method.

The diffusion of this *communis opinio* explains why, in this discussion concerning democracy and socialism, no one bothered to pause on the always fascinating subject (an otherwise classic subject of political philosophy in all times) of the reasons for preferring the democratic over the autocratic method. That democracy is preferable to autocracy is accepted as obvious. But since it has not always been obvious—indeed the contrary has almost always seemed obvious—the subject merits some discussion.[11] The subject is all the more pertinent since the question under consideration implies not only an axiologically positive judgment on the democratic method in general, but a specific positive judgment on the validity of the democratic method for the advent of socialism, i.e., it implies that if there are reasons for preferring the democratic over the autocratic method, these reasons hold true even, and *above all*, for a society in transition to socialism.

To make an effort at summarizing the enormous literature on this subject, the democratic method is preferable according to three fundamental perspectives: the first which I will call "ethical," the second more properly "political," and the third "utilitarian." The ethical perspective is that which can be found in the famous Rousseauian definition of freedom according to which freedom is "obedience of the laws which each ascribes to oneself." It is a matter of the so-called positive liberty, or liberty as autonomy. If everyone is all the more free the more he obeys no one but himself, the democratic method, according to the previously given definition, is that which permits the greatest actualization of freedom in the sphere of political, i.e., in that sphere where decisions are taken which become binding on the whole collectivity. Here the positive value of democracy is deduced from the positive

11. I am now thinking of a book such as *Why Democracy?* by Alf Ross (Cambridge, 1952).

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value commonly attributed to liberty as autonomy. Why liberty as autonomy is commonly considered a positive value is a problem about which I have little to say: liberty as autonomy is one of those ultimate values (even if it emerged historically only gradually) which precisely to the extent that it is ultimate is undeducible. Clearly, since it is a matter of an ultimate value, liberty as autonomy is also a limiting value, whose realization is always inadequate. Perhaps, it would be better to say that the democratic method tends toward the actualization of autonomy, whose full actualization is deferred to that fabled "realm of freedom" which Marx and Engels mentioned in the *Manifesto*.

In terms of the political perspective, the reason for preferring democracy lies in its being the main remedy for the abuse of power. That whoever holds political power—which is the greatest power that a man or a group can wield in a given society—has the tendency to abuse it, is a rule of experience which history has regularly corroborated. An obligatory quotation is in order here: "It is an eternal experience that every man, who has power in his hands, tends to abuse it, proceeding to do so until he encounters limits."[12] Such a great maxim of experience is so well recognized that the whole history of political philosophy can be considered a long, continuous and tormented reflection on the question: how can power be limited? One of these limits (not the only one) is the popular control which the democratic method provides.[13]

According to the third perspective which I have called "utilitarian," democracy is held to be preferable to autocracy because it is judged that the best interpreters of the collective interest are the very ones who have that interest. *Vox populi vox dei.* Of the three reasons in favor of democracy, this last is the most questionable, and it is that which seems to bring the most grist in the mill of the reactionaries. It is all too easy to object that, in fact, the single individual cannot see beyond his nose and that the collective interest is never the sum total of individual interests (presuming that this sum can be calculated). Put as few as ten people around a table to discuss the smallest problem and ten different opinions will pop out. *Tot capital tot sententiae.* As long as it is only a matter of expressing opinions, the variety is useful; but when the time comes to decide, to the extent that the decision cannot but be single and univocal, the excessive variety of viewpoints can be an obstacle. One can reply that this objection is applicable above all to direct democracy where collective decisions should be made without intermediations. And it is for this reason that direct democracy works where it is a matter of collective decisions presenting only two alternatives (monarchy or republic, divorce or no divorce, legalization or outlawing of abortion, or, to take Thucydides' classical example from the *agora*, peace or war). The institutions of delegated

12. Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*, Book XI, Chapter IV.

13. Here also an obligatory quotation is in order (a quotation which Carlo Cattaneo liked). Machiavelli said that one must "order the state *so that it is administrated by itself*" and pronounced: "There is no other way to escape these evils than by providing that the laws of the city can hold themselves up: and they will always hold up *when each one will have in his own hands,* and when each one will know, what he has to do and in what he can have confidence." The passage is from the last section of the *Discorso Sopra il Riformare lo Stato di Firenze.*

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or representative democracy are a result of the need to simplify the multiplicity of opinions: this simplification takes place through those processes known in the jargon as "aggregation of demand," and through the designation of committed representatives or delegates whose encounters or collisions occur on pre-established positions.

Whether Democracy Is Desirable in a Socialist Society

I have called attention to these arguments for democracy for the simple reason that, even though they are usually passed over in silence, they are implicit in the discussion of democracy and socialism. Why would there be so much competition to see who can shout about "democracy" the loudest if there were no good reasons for democracy rather than autocracy, not only in a capitalist but also in a socialist society? What can these good reasons be other than the very same ones which make democracy desirable in any society and, to begin with, in a capitalist society? Or, to put it differently, are there as good reasons why, in the transition from a capitalist to a socialist society, the good reasons for democracy are no longer valid? One can only put them to the test. But, precisely in order to put them to the test, it is necessary to make them completely explicit. In this discussion we have assumed that the goodness of democracy was unquestionable. But since we know that it has been questioned and, as I have already indicated, in the history of political thought it has had more enemies than friends, it does not seem at all out of place to settle accounts with these issues.

Let us reconsider briefly, one by one, the three arguments in favor of democracy, and I will say at the outset that these are all the more valid in a socialist society. I will begin with the ethical argument: socialism is not only a movement for the elimination of economic exploitation, but also for the emancipation of man in regard to all forms of his historical and, to the extent that it is possible, natural servitude. Hence, it must appropriate these institutions founded on the principle of autonomy rather than on that of heteronomy. I can give no other meaning to the "liberty" of which Marx and the Marxists speak when they contrapose the realm of freedom to that of necessity if not of autonomy, i.e., of obedience, to repeat the Rousseauean definition, to the laws which we give ourselves. In that ideal society without any state, it is inconceivable that there be no laws (Gramsci in fact calls it a "regulated" society). There will be autonomous and not heteronomous laws—that is all.

In regard to the political argument, i.e., democracy as the control of power at all levels (and not only at the level of the state), a socialist society has more need for it than ever. The abuses of power are that much easier the more power is concentrated in a few hands. If by socialism is understood, in accordance with the predominant historical use of the term, the transition from the ownership of the means of production by single individuals or private groups to ownership by the collectivity, a socialist society can be either democratic or autocratic. The current definition of socialism does not include that of democracy. The need for democracy arises from the consideration

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that in a socialist society the abuses of power are as possible as in a capitalist society. Indeed, if a collectivized economy means a statized economy, they are even easier. In terms of the political argument, democracy in a socialist society loses none of its preferability. Finally, if it is true that one of the arguments in favor of democracy is that it best allows the discovery of collective interests in any given context, not only is it not clear why democracy and socialism must not be destined to be in agreement, but also it is quite clear that their dissociation would be fatal to the very idea of socialism, since either socialism is a system allowing the satisfaction of peoples' needs better than the capitalist system, or else it is another deception.

But there is a further argument, discussion of which should be much longer and better articulated than is possible here: the relation between means and ends. There are instrumental or extrinsic values, and final or instrinsic ones. To the extent that it is a method, democracy has instrumental or extrinsic value. Thus, its preferability depends on its ability to attain the end sought. Those who oppose the connection of democracy with socialism probably have nothing to object to democracy as such: they deny that it is an adequate means to the end. Whether the democratic method is the most appropriate or indeed the only possible method for arriving at socialism cannot be answered in the abstract. The fact that, until now, the transition to societies defining themselves as socialist has occurred with internal or external violence should not be considered as an argument to the contrary. Until now, socialism has been realized in societies which have not had a great tradition of democratic government, and in which therefore the problem of a democratic transition to socialism was never posed.

I ask myself whether Eurocommunism is anything other than the result of a communist party destined to live, grow, reach adulthood and pose the problem of winning power in a society in which, notwithstanding the presence of fringes delegitimizing the democratic method, it has enlarged in these last thirty years its basis of consensus and has reinforced its legitimacy. One can answer with an even stronger argument: if wherever the transition has occurred with internal or external violence, something of that initial violence has not remained in the system of government. This question brings us right into the middle of the problem of the relation between means and ends. It is necessary to know if, once the maxim that the end justifies the means has been taken for granted, one must not pause to reflect for a moment on the maxim that the means condition the end. I will refrain from asking the question of socialism as the end—a question which is far from clear. When we speak of socialist society, do we all mean the same thing? I doubt it. But it is not a good procedure to confront too many problems at once. The problem under discussion is that of the conditioning that the means effect on the end. I hold that the means are not at all indifferent. The maxim that "the end justifies the means" should be corrected in the following manner: "the end justifies the means which do not modify, by corrupting it, the end." The hard and cold maxim "the end justifies the means" was perfect for Machiavelli's prince,

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whose end was purely and simply the conquest or preservation of power (even if Machiavelli himself was then forced to distinguish between the "well employed cruelties" of Agatocles of Syracuse and the "badly employed" ones of Oliverotto of Fermo). But is it also perfect for the new prince seeking to institute a freer, more just and more human society?

Whether Democracy Is Possible in a Socialist Society

It is not enough that democracy be desirable: it must also be possible. I have dwelled on the difficulties encountered in the realization of democracy in contemporary society in my preceding article by outlining the four paradoxes of democracy. To summarize, the four enemies of democracy—understood as the best method for making collective decisions—are the large dimensions, the growing bureaucratization of the state apparatus, the ever greater technical nature of decisions, and the tendency toward the massification of civil society. I am convinced that democracy in a socialist society is even harder. I do not hesitate to mention a fifth paradox. I do not mean to be discouraging but the fact is that hitherto the only clear ideas put forth on the matter have been by those who have maintained that democracy and socialism cannot go together for the simple reason that they are incompatible and, therefore, even admitting that democracy under certain circumstances and with many restrictions is possible, have held that the combination of democracy and socialism is not possible. That for the enemies of socialism democracy and socialism are incompatible is so well known that it is not necessary to stress it.[14] But one must not forget that the incompatibility of democracy and socialism, at least in the so-called transitional phase, is also a traditional theme of a large part of realistic socialism: if the transformation of a capitalist society into a socialist one is a qualitative leap, how can it take place through the democratic method whic is capable of only small and gradual quantitative steps? The question is unsettling, even if a dialectical law sanctified by Engels states that quantity in the long run changes into quality. (Let us even accept it: but couldn't quality be declining? Quantity is quantity and nothing more; but quality can be good and bad.) It is so unsettling that I am not satisfied by the answer I happened to read recently in a miserable little book that sought to demonstrate that, against the false parliamentarianism of the social democrats and those who foolishly imitate them, the true parliamentary way to socialism was that followed by Czechoslovakia in 1948.[15]

But are the answers coming from good socialists who are also good democrats entirely soothing? These answers primarily take two directions: structural reforms (which means that reforms are not enough but what is needed is a particular type of reform) and the broadening of participation

14. One of the main arguments of the antisocialism of the great liberal tradition, both in its conservative wing (e.g., Einaudi) as well as in its radical wing (e.g., Ernesto Rossi), is the irreconcilability of a socialist economy with democratic politics.

15. For the record it is a pamphlet entitled *Without Firing a Shot*, published and distributed by a no better identified Swiss Institute for the East.

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(which means the democratization of economic power as well). In regard to the first point, on the basis of what criterion are structural reforms to be distinguished from non-structural ones? Have there been structural reforms in Italy up until now? And if there have not been any, which are those that can be called such in the Left's program? One of the reforms most upsetting to the traditional Italian order was certainly the introduction of divorce. Is that a structural reform? Evidently not. A structural reform has to cut deeply into the economic base. But can the reform of a given mode of production be the product of a series of partial reforms, none of which is decisive? Let us even admit that complete transformation can be the outcome of a series of partial reforms: up to what point is the system willing to accept them? Who can rule out that there is a limit to the system's tolerance, such that the system will break rather than bend? If those whose interests are threatened react with violence what can be done other than to respond with violence? As for the broadening of democratic participation to the point of conquering the area dominated by economic power, I will limit myself to noting that a consistent and common characteristic of both capitalist and socialist states is the democratic inability to control economic power (i.e., control from below). It is one of those facts against which all reformists and social utopians have hitherto beaten their heads, that the big decisions of economic policy (on which depend small decisions as well) are made autocratically, both in capitalist as well as in socialist countries. Why? Is it a matter of historically determined conditions or of objective conditions which presuppose autocratic power? I ask this question because the suspicion seems more than reasonable that the progressive broadening of the democratic base encounters an insurmountable barrier (within the convines of the system) at the factory gates. Yet it is precisely on the ground of the democratic control of economic power that the battle for socialist democracy is won or lost.

The Main Road

The conclusion of this discussion is a call not to believe in shortcuts. It is not a skeptical conclusion, but only a realistic one. For a century now, every rustling of the leaves has been taken as a sign that capitalism was dead. Yet, entire forests have been chopped down, and still capitalism remains. Unfortunately, since there is no historical memory, every new generation borh into a world that appears horrendous and infamous awaits its downfall any minute, and is forced to commit, on the best of hypotheses, generous errors (errors because they strengthen the adversary). Furthermore, even if my conclusion were to appear skeptical, a bit of skepticism in the face of so much presumptuous and superficial dogmatism never hurt anyone. In reality, mine is a call to study, to reflection, to meditation on historical matters, to reject slogans, formulae, catechisms, the arrogance of the initiated, false erudition and pedantry, difficult talk, the scholastic and sectarian jargon, to study the mechanisms of power (and not only the ideologies legitimating or rejecting them), to prefer the garb of the know-nothing to that of the know-it-all.

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ON CONTRADICTION*

by François George

In memory of Chairman Mao

Two contradictions are in contradiction. One is tragic, or insurmountable, contradiction: two equally founded demands oppose each other without any possibility of reconciliation (e.g., Antigone's conflict). The other is dialectical contradiction, which guarantees its own overcoming. Hegel's use of the German word *Aufhebung*, which means both preservation and suppression, is well known. Translators have proposed equivalents such as "replacement" or "sublimation." I would suggest incorporation, indeed, digestion. Such a translation is not without consequences because it prompts one to think that even if the dialectic has a strong stomach, its functioning is not free of after-effects: one has to wonder if there is such a thing as dialectical waste.[1]

Dialectical contradiction overcomes and takes care of everything, including tragic opposition. Wars and persecutions do not disturb its march: those small, inconsequential massacres are part of the costs of History because, moreover, all that is real is rational. It is the universal solution, just as it is the guarantee that in the end all will ble verified, justified, audited. It's a pity that opponents had to be gunned down, because if they had survived, they themselves would have understood at the end of the line of the dialectic that they should have been shot.

Now it appears that the destiny of those who trusted in this version of the dialectic, who considered it to be not a belief or wager but reason itself, prompts one to doubt this version: take Trotsky's tragic destiny. And what can be said of Marxism in general, which, in wishing to free man, led to a gigantic enterprise of enslavement? "We began in foul weather and head wind, stoically persevered, grew old in misfortune. Here is the work now at hand: what remains of the old goals?"[2] It seems that the tragic returns to dictate its law to the very action, or the very passion, that claimed to exorcise it. Tragic contradiction embraces dialectical contradiction, and not the other way around.

One is compelled to question this solution to all human conflicts, which, in the Marxist dialectic, is called the proletarian revolution. "Just one solution, revolution": is this so certain? Isn't there a myth of revolution? A myth, of course, is something that creates *order*.

The revolutionary project envisages the destruction of the existing power. But, naturally, it does not propose to replace it by another that would bring

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1. One can only guess what kind of response such a hypothesis would have exposed me to during the good old days of Stalinism.

2. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Situations IV*, "Merleau-Ponty," p. 216.

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about approximately the same constraints. The kingdom is not abolished in order to establish the Empire. The Romanovs are not liquidated to make room for Stalin. Revolution wants to be something other than an interlude or a Sunday in history. It is not satisfied with minor change. It wants to have done with oppression and to inaugurate a new era of humanity. Is it possible in this sense? Can it really provide a solution for the problem of power?

This is what some of those who have lived through revolutionary experiences, who have suffered the consequences and who have some right to be heard, are tempted to call into question. "To everyone who reasons," writes Varlet, imprisoned by Robespierre, "it is clear that government and revolution are incompatible." Similarly, the dialectician Hegel does not seem to have learned any other lesson from the French Revolution. Basically, how can a universal negation be transformed into a particular affirmation, asks Hegel. The revolutionary crisis is experienced as "the possibility of everything," which means that everything is imaginary. A determinate, exclusive, depriving real must necessarily follow the dreamed profusion of the possible. At the moment that Sartre baptized as the apocalypse, everyone is master of the totality. But this mastery exists only as negation and cannot be maintained while carrying out concrete actions. Decisions cannot be adopted unanimously by all; moreover, the situation implies a rash of urgent and serious decisions. In short, power reconstitutes itself. No matter how many times one denies it, in exterminating the "factions" that claim to usurp the universal and capture the general will, power ends up asserted with renewed strength when the frenzy of destruction tires out the gallantry.

All decisions and initiatives have a relatively determinate author who is not the universal subject. In this sense, it is an act of authority and inevitably falls under the blow of negation. The revolution of desire and dreams turns into laws and prohibitions bearing on all particular content. As Kant has shown, this negation is the very form of law. Thus, a successful revolution that gains some power and, due to this fact, makes compromises in order to preserve it, inevitably finds a current on its left without any power, which accuses it of no longer being revolutionary and which, in wishing to be the negative of a new positive, seeks to topple it over squarely onto the side of power.

Revolution is against power: it accuses power of usurpation and betrayal. Power is against revolution: it accuses revolution of lack of realism, irresponsibility and, finally, of playing the game of counter-revolution. At this stage, the revolutionary and those in power are equally justified; both are partly right. And it is not clear what sort of reconciliation is possible. How can the absolute become relative, the negative positive, the universal particular, without renunciation somewhere? In this sense, there can only be betrayed revolution: far from being an accident due to local circumstances or political errors, betrayal seems essential—just as adulthood is defined by the disappointments resulting from the failure of the projects of adolescence.[3]

3. The mastery of the totality in the negative mode, which characterizes the revolutionary apocalypse, also constitutes the benefit of that intellectual attitude that consists in refusing to

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Negation cannot be fully carried out without dragging the whole of society into ruin. Terror itself, in fact, indicates the return to positivity because death, in the end, merely affirms nature. Yet, since revolutionary essence is pure negativity, one feels the temptation to evaluate events in terms of a revolutionary truth that is both fiction and myth: on the basis of what was only opposition and was defeated without ever having gained much strength and thus compromised itself with power. Revolutionary authenticity can be discovered not in Trotsky but in the Kronstadt sailors, not in Robespierre but in the Enraged. The possibility of historical salvation can be seen in that "revolution under the revolution" discussed by Michelet, or in that "unknown revolution" described by the Russian anarchist Voline.

But what can be expected from this radical revolution that repudiates power and resolutely refuses its own establishment? Allegedly, revolution by itself constitutes the solution of the contradiction: it need only be permanent. In fact, the answer is merely verbal or imaginary. After all, to what extent can revolution tolerate being permanent? Because it exists, it well realizes that it constitutes an accepted fact, something positive, and that it cannot be put back into play.

If this is not obvious, it is because our view is clouded by the mythical solution of the abolition of power, i.e., the abolition of the Other. Hasn't the King been killed? Power could not reconstitute itself because the Other who occupied or embodied it is henceforth out of the game: after parricide, one is once again among one's own, everyone is a brother—everyone is a proletarian, the people, or "the sovereign" as they used to say in the 18th century. Differences vanish in fusion, the second coming, since the only substantial differences are class differences and the evil class has been virtually eliminated.

Contradiction is located between the people and the non-people, between the whole, encompassing it, and the absolute externality of nothingness. This was essentially Saint-Just's argument in favor of killing Louis XVI: the king is external to the people just as he is outside nature. He is a monster, contradiction itself, an impossibility and his essence implies his non-existence. And Michelet, who considered himself just a plain hillbilly sitting on Carnot's side at the Convention, wrote: "How can that strange being who reigns supreme instead of the people, who believes he contains a people, who believes himself to be infinite, who fancies he concentrates the justification of all in himself, be classified? Is he a lunatic? A monster? A god? Certainly he is not a man."[4]

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admit the dimension of alterity and adversity of all existence, the externality of reality, and which privileges precisely the moment of effervescence and of eruption, swelled with all the possibilities and all the fantasies. Refusing to think according to the more and the less, one entrenches value in negation which is absolute, pure, ideal. At the limit, everything is bad except the utterance itself, which becomes the sole source of justification and the last hope of the person who possesses this rare lucidity. But, perhaps the fruitfulness of action depends on mediating this paradox: one cannot improve the world if one does not begin by desiring it as it is.

4. *History of the French Revolution.*

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Up to that point, revolution may appear to think and act strictly against power and against the Other. But the negation of the negation is haunted by the idea of an absolute positivity, often seen as an original purity to which one must return: to deny that negation which is power, or despotism, or capitalism, to affirm in the end mankind's natural freedom. What constitutes a Republic, said Saint-Just, is the destruction of all that opposes it. However, the Other reappears in the same, or the inside is infiltrated by the outside—and for good reason, since it has been defined only in opposition to this outside. Why should bourgeois ideology not contaminate the proletariat, considering that its own class consciousness is provided from outside by bourgeois intellectuals anyway? Are these intellectuals not above suspicion? And as for the worker delegates, do they not seek to gain a power of their own, to detach themselves from their superiors, to constitute an elite, an upper crust and soon after a new class, or at the very least a "caste"? And even independently of intentions, isn't all this in danger of being objectively produced, without anyone so desiring? In more common terms, doesn't the outside have its agents? The sublimated Other returns as the guilt of the murder shows its effects. The splendid unitary organism is ravaged by inquisition and terror.

A positive negative, or an eternalized crisis, which would simultaneously be a state, is, strictly speaking, inconceivable. Conversely, the positive brought about by the revolution, the State which it establishes, no longer tolerates negation. It is thrown back into the past once and for all, and cannot integrate crisis as do some systems which are more or less sure of themselves: crisis is an inadmissible scandal because it is the resurgence of that outside which was excluded. This is to say that crisis can be ascribed to necessarily perverse influences from outside or to the resistance of the past.

A Manichaean contradiction opposes the Self to the Other: the negative is the other, the outside, what has been rejected. Thus, the Party, which could be compared to Freud's pleasure-self—an archaic psychical formation which includes only pleasurable experiences (it is very natural to exclude what provokes displeasure)—is an absolutely positive being. This is evident in the activist's inability to imagine conflicts at the top of the apparatus. Don't the leaders speak with a single voice? This belief, which the outside observer might deem naive, is co-substantive with the Party, which expends its energies to maintain this belief just as it strives unceasingly to mend its organism. If it is a Communist tradition to have positions publicly defended by those who fought them from the inside, this is not due to a form of institutional sadism, as one might be tempted to believe, but is an attempt to overcome and erase this unacknowledged contradiction.

Similarly, changes in party lines are the object of actual suppressions, and, if necessary, history is modified accordingly. Basically, the Party cannot contradict itself since there can be no contradiction between the Party and Truth. The Party embodies the dialectic instead of submitting to it: it is founded on that point of absolute knowledge, where certitude is finally

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identical to the truth of things. The Communists' position has always been the same. To try to prove the contrary with supporting examples amounts to raising meaningless factual questions concerning rights and values. An adopted position has retrospective value and responds to what has always been desired by History, since Matter, which in this system is the ultimate foundation, cannot make mistakes.

Contradictions are experienced as cracks in the structure or lesions in the unitary organism. Thus, they are hardly tolerated by militants. A phenomenon of overcompensation may result so that "the base" could actually require even harsher repression of "traitors." Similarly, to avoid contradiction, they resort to a stereotyped, impersonal, mechanical style. As a result, they do not venture beyond a codified manner of thinking, and at the Party congress, they only pay attention to what is reeled off from the podium. It is basically a matter of making one entity out of a collective: of making many into *one*. This is the fundamental contradiction that is denied in principle. The problem of the unity of the many, which might have appeared to be purely speculative to the Greeks, is the fundamental question of psychology and politics. Collective formations seek to squash the separation and return to the original body—to the single substance. Sure, it is wonderful for all to be united in the body of Stalin or Mao through their thought, but it is also a delusion that has its price. Collective formations place the individual body outside the law, so that formations become in essence murderers. In any case, "the unity of thought" cannot help but be a joke, and not only must contradiction be exorcised, but in order to do it right there must be no debate: agreement should be a matter of course. In short, lasting differences are no more imaginable in the Politbureau than between Mama and Papa, or Maurice and Jeannette.

This spatial distribution is also temporal. Marxism entails a messianic and eschatological structuration of time. The Revolution—the Big Night—is the mythical moment of reversal. Before, all was negative and nothing could have meaning save in the context of the struggle organized and headed by the Party. This centralist and semi-finalist conception of action, directed solely toward the *goal*, implies the repression of any lateral and autonomous development, of anything that could catch the established scheme unaware—of what Freud would have called the primary processes. Afterward, conversely, all is positive, and it is the residue of negativity or of what is judged to be such that becomes unbearable.

To Merleau-Ponty, who wrote in *The Adventures of the Dialectic* that contradictions remain in the Soviet Union but that the State masks in the same way that it seeks to stop history, Françols Chatelet replied in *La Nouvelle Critique:* to say that it denies the dialectic is to praise the socialist system. In reality, it was a bad dialectic, that of misfortune and suffering. How foolish it is for men to oppose each other: this is not the dialectic, and the proof is that the science of a Stalin is sufficient to put an end to this waste, to unite all men and to put them to work because contradiction is placed in its

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proper perspective: between man and nature. There is no more opposition? There are debates on the best possible means to apply the Party line. And since we are in the absolute reign of positivity, "contradictory positions, far from mutually destroying each other, confront one another in such a way that what is actually positive in each merges at the end of the confrontation." Only the good is preserved and surpassed, while what is bad withdraws of its own accord.

Merleau-Ponty, the philosopher created by capitalism in crisis to prevent the formation of a new Popular Front, refuses to see the "positivity of socialism"; he "closes his eyes to the fact that the struggle against nature is being substituted for the class struggle, and the discussion of opinions for conflict of interest." Contradictions no longer exist in Soviet society, despite what bourgeois ideologues say; the class struggle has disappeared, the economic problems haunting humanity are solved, man "is again becoming" man, work is his expression instead of his alienation, etc.[5]

The mythology of Stalinism could hardly be more fully explained in the face of liberal skepticism. It is evident that historical Marxism tolerates—and exacerbates—contradictions only in view of their future exorcism, already realized in the land of socialism and anticipated even here by the Party. Once the transition has been achieved, the negation of the negative is translated as the negation of negators and of bothersome facts. Contradiction, which can no longer be acknowledged in a society understood as the kingdom of Reconciled Man, must then be exiled to its boundary, in contact with nature, which officially becomes the Other.

But this massive denial of reality, accompanied by projection ("Mr. Merleau-Ponty can take the liberty of claiming that in the Soviet Union there remains who knows what form of exploitation,...he merely expresses a *feeling*.... This is clearly a case...of passionate reasoning"), this permutation of the true and the false, this tyranny of the imaginary and one could say *of desire*, associated as always with the law, cannot be upheld too long. For example, it is not possible for a respectable philosopher to defend consistently such a system without losing all intellectual dignity. A few months later the Stalinist myth was to collapse.

The dictatorship of the proletariat, direct democracy, the power of workers' councils, are slogans that state the problem rather than solve it. The basic question is that of the government of a society by itself, or by the *Self*, which means the exclusion of alterity and the constitution of a system without external dimension. In this respect, Marxism takes up the Hegelian theme of the Absolute Subject or of the Subjected Absolute. But this negation of the negation is, in truth, abstract negation. It merely re-establishes a precarious positivity which subsists solely by dint of violence and lies. This illusory absolute requires for its maintenance heavier sacrifices than the former gods.

5. Cf. François Châtelet, "M. Merleau-Ponty lance l'acommunisme," *La Nouvelle Critique*, July-August 1955. I hope the author will not resent me too much for citing this text, which is not very representative of his work.

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"The specificity of a revolution," stated Merleau-Ponty in a work which, as we have seen, was well challenged, "is to believe itself absolute and not to be so, precisely because this is what it believes." Yet, belief is the condition of salvation and must be saved at all costs. Consequently, revolution excludes opposition: an opponent can only be a traitor, and his existence is unjustifiable because it contradicts the absolute, contradicts itself, is, so to speak, unacceptable.

But, one might say, is it not fitting here to sing the praises of good old Mao's contribution, which allowed us to realize that contradictions could exist among the people, even after the revolution, and could thereby restore fluidity to the system? During a critical period for the Communist movement, marked by the rumblings of de-Stalinization, uprisings in Poland and Hungary, and especially by the dangerous turmoil in China itself, the Great Helmsman actually had the following stroke of genius: In order to obviate the ravages of the inquisition, he attempted to adapt to socialism that flower of the Bourgeois Republic: public and contradictory debate.

There are contradictions in nature, in electricity, in the atom—why not in the people, queries this heir of Hegel.[6] Let mouths be opened, let them voice contradictions. But socialist China is not the radical Republic: the assemblies allow workers to express themselves, but also the Party cadres to spot those elements whose ideological level is blatantly deficient. There is no installation of a parliamentary regime, nor of an institution explicitly designed to handle contradictions with necessary safeguards.

At a time when fighting absolutism seemed to be the top priority, and when he did not hesitate to use the concept of the people in the sense of the French Revolution, Marx praised parliamentary democracy in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*: "The best form of a State is that in which social antagonisms are neither blurred nor forcibly compressed, that is to say superficially and artificially; it is that State in which antagonisms can be expressed openly and thereby find their solution." Here Marx advocates negotiating between opposed forces. But the entire question rests on the status of social antagonisms: up to what point can they be acknowledged? If they no longer exist, as Châtelet would have said, it does not make sense to deplore their absence, and it would be useless to predict the modalities of their expression.

The prince can decree an orgy of assemblies throughout the land, command mouths to open and flowers to bloom, but power is not thereby shared. In turning in on the masses, he will filter out what is useable for his politics, what presents only a minor danger, and what cannot be tolerated and must be eliminated. Those who incite the people to revolt against the leaders and who the left-wing opposition calls revolutionary, are the enemies of the people, the counter-revolutionaries who should be dealt with mercilessly. Those who merely demand local government will be the beneficiaries of his clemency.[7] Clearly, it is invaluable for power to be able to distinguish

6. Mao Tse-tung, "On Contradiction," in *Four Philosophical Essays*.
7. Cf. the hyper-Trotskyist analyses of Pierre Brune in *Socialisme ou barbarie*, Nos. 24 and 29.

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between discrepancies of detail and fundamental opposition, between "constructive" criticism and that which is not, in order to proceed with appropriate corrections, to profit by the play of opinions, divide the opponents and calibrate repression. Having said this, who measures contradiction, and who guarantees that today's difference is not tomorrow's radical antagonism?

Actually, what Marxism-Leninism calls contradiction is in fact contrariety, i.e., opposition from within the same genre, or polarity. Contradiction is universal, says Mao, following Lenin: for example, in physics, positive electricity is opposed to negative electricity just as in the social domain the class struggle rages.[8]

The first thing to notice is that positive electricity does not contradict negative electricity: it is a case of two complementary aspects of one phenomenon as scientific understanding reconstructs it. But, more importantly, short of replacing science by mythology, any sort of struggle between the two electricities is inconceivable, and conversely, to conceptualize the class struggle in accordance with the same model is to admit implicitly that it is in the nature of things and cannot be transcended. Finally, the class struggle is eternalized, whereas Marx considered the confrontation between two camps to be a phenomenon specific to bourgeois society—and, furthermore, to be merely a tendency.

This thinking through opposites is very ancient. In traditional Chinese thought, there is the opposition of yin and yang. Five centuries before Christ, in the West we have the thought of Heraclitus.[9] Actually, our mind is so structured that it is possible to think in terms of opposites, which is equivalent to ordering or classifying.[10] The aborigine contrasts the black cockatoo with its opposite, the white cockatoo, and the fact that he identifies the latter with the sun is another problem.[11] Structural anthropology has shown us that there is no contradiction between the raw and the cooked whose synthesis would be the barbecued, and the fact that a fat pope succeeds a thin one does not throw doubt on the permanence of the institution. On the other hand, revolution both as idea and as process develops by negating itself in the sense that, as Merleau-Ponty said, it is true as movement and false as regime. It is

8. Mao Tse-tung, *op.cit.*

9. In the *Phaedo*, Plato places this thinking through opposites in its proper place, i.e., at the empirical and preconceptual level, whereas in the *Parmenides* and *The Sophist* he defines the dialectic in the modern sense.

10. Freud adopted Karl Abel's idea, according to which, in primitive languages, words require opposite meanings because it is opposition itself, the relation of contrariety, which is seized first, the two terms or the two poles of opposition being differentiated afterward. The mind would see the contrast between day and night, for example, before being able to think of day and night each in its own right. Freud relates this archaic dimension to the unconscious and notably to dreams, where a thing can represent its opposite (cf. *Creativity and the Unconscious*). This hypothesis, which does not seem incompatible with structuralism, has been rejected by Emile Benveniste, who posits the universality of the principle of contradiction, the foundation of all language. But is this a case of contradiction, syncretism, or differential thought? And the word color, after all, can be applied to white as well as to black.

11. Cf. Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life.*

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inside the revolution that counter-revolution is found, even when they are opposed as East and West during the Cold War. This is not due to any poisoning, surreptitious infiltration, or fradulent insemination. On the contrary, it is because revolution is what it is.

The dialectical idea is that of a determination of the same by the other such that the same, so to speak, experiences an equal need for the existence of the other and for its suppression. Nonetheless, the other, because it is the other, prevents the same from fully being the same. Or, furthermore, the dialectical idea is that of a being which, insofar as it is rational and intelligible, carries its negation within itself along with its future truth, but without this revelatory negation being reducible to the symmetry of contrariety, and without losing its character of adventure. The dialectic is not the codified, policed relation of opposites. It is the unpredictable and tragic relation of the same, of what in the illusion of the present I believe I grasp exactly as it is, to *an other* which is revealed only *a posteriori* rather than being directly given like a twin brother. Whatever dialectical materialism ("diamat") teaches as a result of its desires for mastery and from the depths of the negation of time, the content of negation cannot be known in advance: history has surprises in store (which under these conditions cannot be too good) not because it is the realization of a Spirit whose principles are already given in the "beginning," but because it is the genesis of sense through the confusion of facts—and of non-sense if one wished to make it a simple development, e.g., a succession of stages. One can, at least up to a certain point, dominate nature, but one cannot dominate history, except to think about it like nature, which is to side-step it altogether... History cannot be made into a household God—clerical or partisan. History would not be in the least historical without that *invention* that, strictly speaking, is attributable to no one and is due to that passage through the other that we are attempting to describe. "I don't know what" does not mean "it does not matter." In truth, if the *a prioris*, which are purely arbitrary, are cleared away, there are never monstrous breedings. But there is no biological regularity. Writing about the "logic of the living," the biologist François Jacob pointed out that very early, man realized that a dog is born of a dog, wheat of wheat, i.e., the same fellow creature forms the same fellow creature—he even made this into a theological truth. Marx wanted to construct a logic of social reality which would permit one to think, to recover and to dominate the historical formation of the dissimilar, which in effect is merely the developed same fellow creature. Similarly, certain theoreticians have attempted to reduce mathematical propositions to tautologies. Socialism must be born from capitalism because, in a way, capitalism is already socialism: it carries the program in its genes. It was necessary to establish that history escapes this logic, that socialism, at least such as it was dreamt of, is born neither from capitalism nor from the abolition of what were considered to be the fundamental characteristics of capitalism—history was giving birth to *something else*...

The situation of the philosopher of history could be compared to that of the

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photographer in Cocteau's ballet "The Newlyweds of the Eiffel Tower": the photographer announces that the little birdie will pop out of the camera, and out pops a sunbather from Trouville, a child in tights, a lion... These unplanned events prompt the photographer to claim that "Since these mysteries are beyond me, let's pretend to be their organizer." In this way, the philosopher of history becomes political.

One could hypothesize about the hidden side of the present, which, in appearing later, makes up the totality of the actual. Jankélévitch suggests that time is the means whereby contradictory elements co-exist in succession: time prevents the explosion of impossibility, or at least defers it. The challenge of authority will *turn out* to be the demand for authority: but was it already so or was it perverted en route, led astray by adverse forces; and could this not be the logic of the newly instituted order that is warping our perspective or our retrospect? Did we want freedom? Or were we asking for a new servitude because the old one, while clinging to existence, had lost its glamor, its reasons for being, and thus henceforth had become intolerable?

But under these conditions, one can wonder whether it would be possible in the present, i.e., in action, to acquire a lucidity capable of outwitting the cunning of history. For example,—I am purposely providing a completely imaginary and caricatural example—if certain revolutionaries become terrorists, so that they can bring about fascism since fascism in turn will itself provoke the awakening of the masses, unlock history and finally permit the attainment of socialism, if therefore there were ever people who defended this logic of history, who pushed the Marxist schema to madness, one might think that these terrorists wanted fascism period, because, after all, we all know that fascism is an absolute. Perhaps it would not be ruled out to forestall somehow the historical reversal and to acknowledge fascism here as an end and socialist revindication as a means.

At any rate, even if attempts at lucidity are never wasted, it must be admitted beyond doubt that history advances wearing a mask. In the human context, filiation is betrayal—this is clear in the history of thought. And historicity seems inseparable from that reversal which takes place, to adopt Hegel's term without his optimism, behind people's backs. We can joke about Stalinists too easily; I am thinking of French Stalinists: courageous men whose criticism was solid, whose struggle was necessary, whose hope was justified, popped up from one day to the next like jumping jacks, like suckers who mistook the devil for the Good Lord. Since everything is now clear, and after the onslaught the continuity appears to have no cracks and the sequence seems perfectly intelligible, we think that they could have at least paid attention, lent their ears to warnings, and reflected some more. Surely even though in such ventures it is necessary to make allowances for emotional elements and intellectuals who, even if and especially if they are professionals, could only catch bits and pieces... Having said that, it is appropriate, if only to protect oneself against repetition, to be indulgent because this is a tragic matter (even if the French Stalinists' epic was at least partly farcical).

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Furthermore, did the critics of Stalinism, the Trotskyists, or even the critics of Trotskyism, fare any better? Are we not tempted today to dismiss all these irreconcilable adversaries with one stroke? It may be time to acknowledge a drift that is incomprehensible through the technical schema of action, a *principle of drifting*.

I notice, for example, that the Maoists, or in any case, a significant number of them, are becoming Christian. Were they already so in 1968? Or is it their failure that has led them to this return? But in this case, would there not be a connection between their Maoism and Christianity, which made this return possible? History, which Hegel and Marx levelled before our very eyes, regains its depth. And this historical depth goes with the interiority of subjects—that interiority which led to the formulation of the idea of the unconscious that secularizes the tragic. Interiority is what makes the innocent guilty. It provides a surface in the subject where his future guilt can be written. For example, Marx carried out the Gulag *within himself*. In a shameful false bottom of being an unacknowledged intention there is made up something that is none other than the projection of a subsequent act.

Without prejudice to what can actually be established in each individual case, is there not a new means of preventing this historical adversity, this *real* that transforms that "although" into "because?" We know the story: a young man, unaware of the past, without ties, meets a passer-by who attempts to block his path. This is the equivalent in our day to a banal case of refusal to yield right-of-way. Rather than reaching an amicable agreement, the two adversaries become heated; the stronger one leaves the other on the ground. Subsequently, he arrives in a town which he rescues from its demons and, as a result, he is greeted with enthusiasm; he marries its queen. The man is courageous, intelligent, and proves to be a good administrator. All goes well, until it is discovered that he is guilty of parricide and incest, that his presence brings the gods' vengeance upon the city, *and it is plain to see* from that time on that his entire conduct was never dictated by anything but arrogance, frenzied ambition and the transgression of sacred laws. Has he not given proof of a diabolical intrigue with the Sphinx?

In this regard, François Tricaud[12] speaks of "substituted meaning": the second meaning alone becomes acceptable and reduces the first to a memory. It is perhaps necessary to consider this unsuspected meaning of our action which we know has been qualified by some as *objective*, and which Sartre, borrowing from Gide, has termed the devil's doing (*la part du diable*). Without doubt, it is necessary to reflect anew on this double version of history—the authentic version never being the one we have signed, sometimes with our blood.

If there is one task now on philosophy's list of priorities, it is to reflect on becoming, beyond contingency and necessity, e.g., in appealing to the notion of motivation, in trying to direct attention to contentment and rally points

12. Cf. Dalloz's *L'Accusation-Recherche sur les figures de l'agression ethique*. The best books are not necessarily the ones talked about the most.

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rather than to causes. It is not because socialism is not in capitalism that the Gulag is in Marx. As a matter of fact, necessity exists only in sequences of logical propositions, i.e., it does not exists—unless one reverts to Hegelian idealism, perhaps in order to impute to Hegel the crimes for which he is, at best, the inspiration. What must be considered now more than ever is the juncture between thought and what is not thought.

In any case, it is impossible to predict precisely where dialectical effect or relation will lead or what it will generate, which means that the dialectic is inherent to experience insofar as experience necessarily entails failure as a possibility. One does encounter true contradiction which, like reality, is not the pastime of a spirit who overlooks phenomena and dominates them. That is the position of power, and specifically the technician's power: but it is precisely the engineer's activity which is not in the least dialectical. To the extent that the job is done correctly, it cannot be challenged by matter; if the dam breaks, it is because there was an error in calculation and that is all. This can be tragic in its consequences but not in its principle: that calculation was factually and rightfully possible.

Revolutionary—bureaucratic—power sends agents equipped with the "dialectic," i.e., with a gadget, slide rule and memory jogger, out into social reality. Lenin or Mao give militants a polyvalent, universal theoretical device whose formalism, like a placebo, has primarily the function of reassuring them. To depart for a moment from the existential domain which is the only true one, dialectical contradiction could be said to approximate Russell's antinomy. Antinomy means that the negation of the contradictory proposition is itself contradictory. If the foundation of mathematics alone is at stake, this may not be a catastrophe; the problem of foundations can always be left to metaphysics. But if it is displaced onto history, that is enough to turn reason into a tragedy. Contradiction is what is incommensurable with thought, insurmountabale difficulty or the aporia—e.g., the antinomy in a revolution which has had to destroy the established order but which is obliged to reconstitute at least part of it in order to survive. Contradiction entails the danger of annihilation or of radical negation.

As a matter of fact, if we could free ourselves for a moment from the catechism that Marxism-Leninism has imposed on us, we are compelled to remember that contradiction is *unacceptable*. It marks the emergence of the impossible. It is through contradiction that the liar is unveiled. If, for example, I am traveling in a socialist country and I am told that there are opponents of the regime (which justifies the state's repressive apparatus), and I observe elsewhere that the Party receives 99 percent of the votes in elections, I realize that there is a contradiction. And if these results are explained to me by saying that even discontents are aware of the regime's accomplishments and consequently vote for the Party, I realize that they are kidding me.

Socrates founded philosophical reflection by prevailing upon his listeners—the representatives of the established order—by showing them to be in contradiction with themselves and thereby reducing them to silence. All of

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his opponents at least implicitly acknowledge that there is one basic law that one accepts when speaking, the principle of non-contradiction, without which reason and meaning would be naught. And Kant pointed out that in venturing beyond the limits of experience, pure reason cannot claim anything valid since the thesis as well as the antithesis can then be shown to be the case. Thus, it can both be proven that the world has a beginning and that it does not, or that the world implies a necessary being or that it does not, etc. Consequently, Kant advises us to limit ourselves to experience and to make only relative judgments in order to avoid the possibility of reason contradicting itself.

The imperative of coherence is categorical, even in the ethical sphere. The least contradiction invalidates legal texts, and elsewhere paradoxical or contradictory injunctions constitute moral sins. One need not appeal to Kant to recall that I must keep my promise and not break my word. If I commit myself, I have the right to break this commitment the moment I realize that it leads me to politics that contradict principles to which I have committed myself. Like the prohibition of incest, the principle of contradiction is at the foundation of culture.

But just as it is impossible to allow contradictions, it is necessary to acknowledge them: to use Charcot's words, which impressed Freud so much, our categories *do not prevent them.* In pure logic, to be contradictory is to be unable to exist. But existence is of the same order as contradiction insofar as it is irreducible to discourse. To the extent that it is, existence is irrational. It cannot be transformed into a proposition or made part of a system.

In life there is something irretrievable, unorganizable and ultimately unlivable which makes it thrilling or pathetic, gives it absolute value and finally makes it what it is: life itself. Life cannot be demonstrated: we would reach blatant absurdities. It is of the same kind as the account that begins with freedom and ends with oppression, or begins with communication, transparency, and ends with solitude and power. In discussing tragedy or the "necessary-impossible" in his *Treatise on Virtue,* Jankélévitch proposes calling becoming "the ingenious cunning whereby a being which is no longer viable escapes and prolongs his life functions, pushes the inevitable fall ever further away and indefinitely eludes catastrophe."

The classics did not have these misgivings because they considered existence to be God's creation—having demonstrated the existence of God, which seemed relatively easy, they were finished with existence. They thought that the entire system of rationality rested on a foundation that they could not recuperate but which could not compromise the system as it was of the same nature of the foundation. For example, mathematical arguments did not start from arbitrary axioms as they do for us, but from obvious postulates that the "natural light" emanating from God revealed to the mind.

To think about contradiction means to attempt to recuperate the unthinkable, to think as far as possible in order to touch reality. It is the transgression of this prohibition that the law-giver had legitimately opposed

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to human reason: You will go no farther than phenomena, you will never grasp the essence of things. Without developing a tragic philosophy, Kant basically considered contradiction to be radical, e.g., the contradiction between knowledge and action, one excluding the freedom that the other requires. He thus recommended that reason be restricted in the space reserved for and delimited by the non-contradictory, just as Voltaire advised men to cultivate their own gardens.

Such an account of contradiction is ruled out by Marxism because, to the extent that it is not embarrassed by the procedures of classical metaphysics, thought is identical to being, and this solves all problems *a priori*. History, like existence, is avoided by this initial solution which guarantees the final one: the state of non-contradiction, the end of lay theodicy and a homogeneous society without conflicts. In this sense, Marx falls prey to Nietzsche's criticism of the metaphysical illusion: "This world is contradictory; *therefore* there is a world free from contradiction."[13]

As for the identity of thought and being, there is a clever and interesting way to justify this incredible metaphysical trick, if, along with the early Lukács, one abides by praxis and the speaking matter of capitalism. In point of fact, history and economics are both object and concept, and, of course, social and historical existence belong to the symbolic domain. Like Kant, but naturally on a different level, we can say that what is real is what we have ourselves produced.

One of the most important things Marx shows is that the economic dimension is not that second nature whose inflexibility bourgeois economists take pleasure in describing, just as the commodity is in fact a moment in a process of communication. Social being has become alienated in economic reality as it was previously in the religious domain. The demands of foreign trade must be respected as was the will of God in former times: the clergymen have become experts, and we have replaced the superstitions of priests with those of economists.

Underneath what appeared as objectivity, Marx discovered decisions, wills and strategies. Initially, capitalism is a human choice, even if no one chose it —in fact, some societies have even rejected it. And in any case, it has been chosen *a posteriori* since capitalism is an ethic. Listen to Adam Smith, for example, condemning the abundant tables and sumptuous stables, i.e., spending, and explaining the best way to utilize one's money: to launch enterprises that will increase the nation's wealth. Yet, it was Marx who, especially in the *Communist Manifesto*, criticized feudal values most severely and paid the highest homage to bourgeois enterprise's conquest of the world. Marx chose capitalism—of course, as a preliminary and a principle to be developed dialectically....

It can be maintained that Marxism grasps reality because it seeks to re-establish and prolong what capitalism outlines and sublimates, because capitalism subjects all things to market equivalence (y commodity A equals x

13. *The Will to Power.*

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commodity B), because in it all reality rotates on the logical operations of buying and selling and, finally, because it subjects history to a formula that can be summarized in two letters, one of which is primed (A-M-A' equals money invested in the production of a commodity that will yield more money, and so on to infinity). But what is lost in mystical power cannot be compensated by what is gained in rationality, and Lukács disavowed his early essays in order to accept the serious theory of reflection. Having said that, what is important to see is that Marxism triumphed as an economism which was imposed on a global level as the dominant ideology.

Marxism's great inspiration can be formulated as follows: I am reality which speaks, I am the expression of history.... This requires an element of modesty: it is not I, Marxism, who decides or provides, it is history itself, which I am pleased to reflect exactly—in other words, theory's position of power is disguised. Theory is powerful only because it is true: because it is a reflection.

In Descartes, the shift from thought to existence is laborious: it requires the asceticism of the *cogito* and refined proofs for the existence of God. It is much smoother in Malebranche, Spinoza or Hegel, but at the price of mysticism: they accept it from the outset. In Marx it is even swifter. In *The German Ideology*, he proposes what we cannot refuse: to see reality as it is. No more speculation, mystification or fantasy: what good is all that? Nothing is as good as simple empirical observation. For a long time we were expecting a definition of reality which could be put to good use. Well, reality is the reproduction of material life. This time, finally, the philosopher's eye sees accurately. Consciousness is but consciousness of existing praxis; it believes it is emancipated the moment intellectual labor is separated from material labor, but this is an illusion since matter encompasses everything. Consciousness is brought back to the conditions of existence. But how? By a superconsciousness which simultaneously sees the thing, i.e., the relations of production, and its reflection, i.e., ideology. The reflection is reflected to a second degree by this superior and infallible consciousness, which replaces God and consequently finds itself to be the bearer of truth.

The primacy of reality over consciousness is inverted in the omnipotence of ideology. How could this be otherwise since this concerns the reality represented by Marxist consciousness which, like any metaphysical consciousness, is certain of having grasped being? We can put our finger on the totalitarian mainspring of materialism. Since the revolution is in things, in the infrastructures and in the *objective* relations among men, it must be made to occur whatever the cost: violence is employed in the name of an Idea that has been disguised as the truth of the facts. Absolute knowledge, the reversibility of thought and being, is the alibi for absolute power. Marxism knows the secret and can thus reveal the desire or the will of matter. To what is superficial, profane and insignificant, it opposes what is hidden, true and valid. Take away private property and you find socialism waiting for this revolutionary gesture to appear already fully formed—just as in the 18th

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century it was thought that after removing the despot one would find man enjoying his good nature and his essential freedom. Marxism is arrogant toward previous socialisms, which envisaged the proletariat only as suffering and brooded over the unhappy fate of the working classes: it knows that the proletariat as such must play an historical role—or a metaphysical one, since it is a matter of a concept—or mystical, since it is also a matter of an embodied concept. But under the influence of the Idea, real and suffering men do not let themselves be so easily forgotten, to the point that they must be shot "like rabbits"[14] in the name of the Idea. And finally we return to the starting point, suffering: Marx has not gone beyond Zola.

In fact, if truth is found concentrated in a single expression, be it God or Marxist science held by the Party and individually by the congenial and beloved Party leader—if it is lodged in an absolute subject, there can be no dialectic since the latter presupposes communication between subject and object. Historicity means that the object of knowledge can intervene in knowledge and can determine its truth—something that Kant never envisaged. The object of discourse can react to that discourse about itself. This is enough to make the difference between nature and history, between the physical world and the human world; it is what makes the dialectic historical and renders it irreducible to mere oppositions or to the contrariety of the more and the less such as hot and cold, etc. History is a *sensual* medium. What I am saying of history, if I were called Marx, changes history, while what Heisenberg says about the electron, no matter what it is, leaves it unchanged.

Basically, this is Popper's main argument against historicism and particularly against Marxism: historical knowledge influences history, even if it is claimed in principle that the development of this knowledge is but a reflection of material changes.[15] And Merton has spoken of creative, or destructive, prediction in the same vein: "Predictions of the return of Haley's comet do not influence its orbit. But the rumor of the insolvency of the Bank of Millingville had a direct effect upon its fate. Prophesizing its collapse was sufficient to provoke it."[16]

In short, the fact of publishing a thesis contributes to making it true or false. As a result, it is to a certain extent because the forecast is true, or is good, that it becomes false. Once uttered, the prediction enters into the situation, becomes an element of reality, and is exposed to the effects of forces that tend to invalidate it. It is not impossible that if Marx had filed his philosophy of history with a notary public rather than made it into manifestos, it would have been further validated in reality.

It is true that the problem, for a prediction, is not to be accurate but to be glaring. What counts is that it be made, and that from thsi moment on it play the role of a law or a norm. In a nutshell, it exists not to be followed to the

14. Words used by Trotsky while suppressing the Kronstadt insurrection of 1921.
15. Cf. *The Poverty of Historicism.*
16. *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Glencoe, Ill., 1957).

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letter, which would rule out any free will, but to permit calculations or function as a guide, to somehow guage phenomena which could neither be related to a common denominator nor would lend themselves to any sort of reading. Marxism has thus provided an estimate of history for which everyone, on the whole, is grateful. Thanks to it, the future is organized and we know where we can go. Events are evaluated in terms of the maps it has drawn and nothing is held against it for not having been rigorously verified. This is not what was expected of it, and one would lay the blame more readily on history, which could have shown itself to be more rational. To predict is more a moral than a scientific act. He who takes responsibility for it must attest to its authority and also to its benevolence. Jérôme K. Jérôme remarked that we resent the weatherman who predicts rain, even if he is right, while we forgive the one who forecasts good weather, even if he is mistaken: after all, he did what he could. He who would say: "At any rate, it will always turn out badly," doubtless would be the least likely of all the prophets to make mistakes, but would be judged with as much severity as Bernard-Henri Lévy.

Marxism is an optimism because it assures that humanity poses only those problems that it can solve. To be sure, this optimism is bound to an alternative: if humanity does not follow its vangard on the path of the universal solution, Marxism is no longer responsible. Socialism or barbarism. But that the search for socialism can lead to barbarism, or that barbarism can absorb socialism and make it its banner, is a tragic dialectic that does not occur to Marxism or even to that unhappy Marxism that is Trotskyism.[17]

Trotskyists defend the honor of the Bolshevik Revolution: it had nothing to do with the deportations, persecutions and assassinations of which they themselves were so often the victims. It is then necessary to find recourse to the idea of a skid, a fracture or an accident. This is Rousseau's way of thinking: in the state of nature, human needs were exactly proportionate to the means available to satisfy them; nature was good, and so was man who belonged to it. How, then, can one explain the transition to the present state of servitude? By a catastrophic modification of the climate and of living conditions; in a nutshell, by an outside phenomenon. Floods and earthquakes have destroyed the initial harmony. The difference between Rousseau and the Church fathers is simply that the latter blamed the catastrophe on Adam. How was man's fall possible if everything was perfect in the Garden of Eden? Original sin, which explains our miserable condition, is itself inexplicable in terms of the starting point. In short, the fundamental—and very emotionally charged—idea in both cases is that of a thoroughly good being which excludes all negativity. The passage from essence to existence and historicity thus implies an outside intervention: a perversion or a betrayal. In this way, revolution was diverted from its truth.

17. These last years, the Trotskyist viewpoint has found its best expression in Pierre Fougeyrollas' book, *La Révolution prolétarienne et les impasses petites-bourgeoises*. But if the argument is rigorously conducted in accordance with principles, the latter are never questioned so that the theory takes on an axiomatic character—at least in the eyes of readers who do not share the same commitment.

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Someone who was not taken into account in the program has come to prevent it from becoming what it was meant to be: the appropriate object of human desire. It would not be impossible to compare this thinking to that of the oedipal phase. At any rate, it is difficult to reconcile it with Marxism, which accepts history's judgment and believes that a thing's truth is its development—securely establishing itself for a long time in the transitory, always hoping that next year's history will finally decide to crawl back into its schema and thereby erase Stalinism as a nightmare. If the dialectic is considered internal, what becomes of it if it is admitted that an accident or a series of accidents can be substituted for essence? And if one adopts this theory of contingency, it becomes strange to appeal to a man who, ever since the constitution of the Bolshevik Party, had the ability to announce the stages of evolution: the party will take the place of the proletariat, the central committee will replace the party, and finally a single dictator will take the place of everything....

Official Marxism truncates the dialectic because it excludes the possibility of it being challenged, since it considers the fundamental principles as being beyond debate—while the dialectical idea is that consequences can refute principles. The dialectic implies doubt and is above all a dialectic of foundations: for hierarchical or theological determination of the grounding and what is ground, it substitutes a reciprocal relation that makes grounding dependent upon that which it grounds. On the contrary, Marxism excludes a combination of certitudes, according to which it must organize a technical action. Marxism's prestige came largely from its technological optimism, whereby the answer is contained in the question. It is clear that Trotskyism entails the same principles, and that it clings to them all the more since it sees them as its sole strength and its only hope. There is thus no experience. And these materialists win renown they have not chosen and whose very existence they deny: obviously it is not their historical efficiency that can be listed to their credit, nor the scientific accuracy of their theses, but their moral grandeur and the steadfastness of their soul.

That Marx is external to the Communist phenomenon is not a fact that can be readily discarded in this radical contingency which, according to Aristotle, feeds the monsters and discourages the concept. Precisely because of this, dialectical thought rehabilitates the idea of alienation, or "estrangement" (*extranéation*) according to the debatable neologism coined by Jean Hyppolite in translating Hegel's *Entfremdung*.[18] In being realized in the world, Marx has been negated. But if the dialectic becomes external, it does so with the certainty of being able to recover. The whole question is in whether we are headed toward redemption, fulfillment and salvation.

Revolution presents two very distinct sides that have been amalgamated by Marxism. On the one hand, revolution is prepared in the infrastructure, it

18. Cf. his translation of *The Phenomenology of Mind* into French, Vol. II, translator's note 85: "The *estrangement* of spirit will designate the movement whereby spirit becomes foreign to itself."

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burrows underground like a mole and it suddenly bursts into the light of day because violences become inevitable to order the contradictions of a blocked society. On the other hand, it is something desired, believed in, and not half-way because faith is all or nothing—in short, it is the sovereign good. But the problem is that revolution cannot be made without being desired and believed in: for revolution to pass as the sovereign good is an illusion necessary for its realization, just as, according to Schopenhauer, the intoxication of love is an illusion without which the reproduction of the species could not take place.

But if objective process attracts subjective participation, it does not follow that revolutionary reality corresponds to revolutionary desire. The new reality will satisfy those who have understood the demands of change without lyricism, but not those who, believing in the myth, have contributed the most to the realization of that reality which betrays the myth.

Is to question the myth of revolution the same as defending the established order? This is what is claimed by the supporters of a new power and of a new order—those governors who only make revolution in order to govern anew. To posit the relative as the truth of the absolute is not to say that all is the same or that we must resign ourselves to what exists simply because it exists. To speak of myth is not to deny the existence of demands for objective and subjective changes, and does not mean at all that revolution is entirely an illusion. Since we are still living well within the bounds set by the French Revolution, it would not be useless to re-examine the rights and laws that it brought into the world. That those who had defended them were later led to reject them is an aspect of that tragic dimension previously mentioned. At any rate, there is necessarily some difficulty in discussing the Revolution while defining it as a contradictory process. The fact that Jacobinism prefigures Bolshevism does not preclude finding in the French Revolution, and not in the Bolshevik Revolution, a certain novelty, reality, and efficiency: in a word, an historical creation.

A new philosophy of law can be found there which entails the recognition of the other as such—the right to defense or the right not to be devoured by an absolute society comparable to an abusive mother, and the right to existence as an autonomous individual. The law acknowledges externality to the extent that it is meant to arbitrate confrontations between subjects and not to fundamentally reunite them.[19]

One can see here that the Marxist critique seeks to be progressive but it is actually regressive since it leads back to a fused society. Marx criticizes human rights because, according to him, they are but the rights of *man separated from man.* The law confirms this separation, and it does not deal with the right of fusion. In the fury of love, one forgets all juridical preoccupations. And then comes the moment of divorce, when the household effects are divided and it must be determined what belongs to whom, the amount of alimony, etc. In collective formations or in perfectly integrated societies,

19. François Tricaud, *op. cit.*

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which, as Freud has shown, are based on love, this recognition of the separated person and his freedom is unthinkable. The sole right is that of taboo on rape. It is concerned with the Order of the whole and the upholding of this order, whose head is its safekeeper. This is why Bukharin pleads guilty. To the extent that he accepts the closure of the system he can find no refuge and countersigns his condemnation, which can only be his annihilation. Fusion imposes this alternative.

Marx challenges the distinction between man and citizen: the famous "Declaration of the Rigths of Man" only juxtaposes an allegorical person to that egotistical individual, the member of civil society.[20] This thesis can be given a somewhat "leftist" interpretation. It can be interpreted as a rejection of the mystification of politics and of representation, the wish to rehabilitate sensual and profane being—in short, it can be seen as an attractive demand for unity. But this is to sidestep the question and to promulgate a formidable illusion.

What is in question is the elimination of this private sphere considered as a characteristic of the bourgeoisie. It is that which the bourgeois regards as himself: his business, his economic activities—in a word, his social role. The contradiction is obvious. But can the sensual individual be reduced to this bourgeois conception of the "private"? To be sure, the attempt to eliminate the distinction between man and citizen amounts also to eliminating the contradiction in man. But can one succeed? It must be noted that movement is always in the same direction of an *absolute commitment to value* or, to speak like Marx, to allegory. Such is precisely the fate to which Marxism subjected the proletariat. It is in the Party that the proletariat finds its moral being—the proletariat actually exists only to the extent that it is a member of the collective—i.e., of the Idea—or of the divided totality. Marx has clearly explained that what counts is not this or that empirical proletariat, which is certainly not revolutionary. It is necessary that a rightful and historical proletariat be substituted for this natural proletariat. The result is a positive being, but one which is only a concretized abstraction, and in which the fundamental positivity of natural life is negated. Needless to say, this negation in principle can be enforced.

In the symbolic order, the whole proceeds the parts. Society is not constructed by the addition of individuals because, as Rousseau said, an individual is already a whole. On the contrary, it is society as a whole that is divided into parts which, in being of a different order, coincide only approximately with the former individuals. Naturally, there is a danger of dissolution: the "civil mainspring" can wear out, and from then on the collective "falls apart and ceases to exist."[21] Thus, it must protect itself against this entropy, i.e., against nature.

The truth is that the Party is constituted like the State. The Party, said Marx before Lenin, is the proletariat constituted as class. In short, it is the act

20. Cf. *On the Jewish Question.*
21. *The Social Contract.*

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whereby class becomes a class since it is initially given only as a "disseminated mass assembled by coincidence." In the *Communist Manifesto*, before Lenin, Marx advocates the "centralization of the national struggle."

The proletariat's Party is constituted like the State of the bourgeoisie or at least of bourgeois political thought: atomistic individuals weary of mutually bearing the blame end up understanding that they would do better to unite within specific territorial boundaries, if only in order to more effectively combat others. To these reconstructions one can object that the State is always there, that the basic convention which Rousseau discusses has never actually taken place. This is possible.[22] Yet, the Party follows this genesis to the letter: its history is an experimental verification of bourgeois political philosophy.

The Party—and the Marxism that sustained it in considering it as belonging to the Proletariat—cannot be reproached for using the traditional recipes for the City, and for not having overcome what Durkheim calls the "dualism of human nature." But rather than believe the utopia has been realized or that the reconciliation has been carried out, it would be wise to reflect on that fundamental contradiction between our existence as body and our existence as members of a social reality which simultaneously dominates us, confronts us, and defines us—a mortal contradiction. Socrates says nothing different to Crito in lending his voice to the law: it would serve no purpose to save his miserable rags because what constitutes him as Socrates is not this heap of bones and muscles but a symbolic commitment, a relation with what transcends the realm of the body and the sensual. And in the same vein, Rousseau explains that if the natural individual reappears in the city, it will be appropriate to remind him that he is legally dead.... Finally Sartre, rightly seeing the Party as constituting the proletariat from dust, goes as far as to accord it a sort of right of life and death over its members. Sartre, the thinker of subjectivity, knows full well that subjectivity cannot found anything by itself. To guarantee what Rousseau terms the contract, something other than an intersubjective relation is required: a genuine third party which transcends it and provides it with necessity.

This antinomy of nature and society, the sensual and the symbolic, can be deplored and perhaps one can even try to manage it. Revolution, on the contrary, proceeds by denegration: it assures that social facts bear no resemblance to things and that if they are what they must be, they are an idea that is identical in everyone's head—except the bad ones, of course.

22. From the Freudian perspective, the social contract follows the murder of the father and the anarchical phase during the course of which each conspiring brother attempts to take his place. Rousseau's thinking appears to confirm this viewpoint on two distinct levels. First, it is translated as the elimination of the individual embodied Sovereign that is found, e.g., in Hobbes: one could say that Rousseau in a way proceeds to theoretical murder. If society engages in a contract with itself, behind this mirror image the ghost of the monarch, indeed the totem, must be recognized. Next, and here we enter the practical level, it is clearly in this spirit that the French Revolution wanted to apply Rousseau. One can admit that insofar as the first two stages are concerned, the murder of the archaic father and the brothers' quarrels, the program has been scrupulously carried out. But was the contract signed? And what about the totem?

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The myth of revolution means first and foremost the dissolution of objectivity. As in the old theater or at communion, the barriers between individuals, be they social, economic, political or other, fall with a general sigh of relief. The kindgom of reciprocity and transparency is *de facto* established. Everyone shares the same fraternal subjectivity—that absolute substance which Hegel speaks about and which constitutes the unity of various self-consciousnesses. To quote Hegel again, consciousness comes "out of the empty night of the supersensual beyond to enter into the spiritual day of presence."[23]

Another night seems to have ended in this manner, that of August 4th. Let's listen to Michelet: "It was late at night—two o'clock. This night carried the immense and painful dream of a thousand years of the Middle Ages. The dawn which began soon after was that of freedom. *Since that enchanged night, no more classes, but French people; no more provinces, but one France.*"[24]

It will be said that this is precisely the myth of the bourgeois revolution. It makes people believe in equality, in the abolution of privilege, in fraternity. Elsewhere, however, on another stage that eludes people's gaze, it organizes the redistribution of property and social labor; it brings about the conditions for proletarian exploitation. This argument and demystification were put forth once and for all by Marx.

But what is happening with the proletarian revolution? One is no longer called citizen but comrade. Strictly speaking, in the revolution that draws its inspiration from Marx, people are even more brotherly than in Robespierre's time—if that is possible. For example, the bourgeoisie accepts the class struggle (which, it must not be forgotten, was initially a bourgeois idea). Isn't this because it is afraid, in its fashionable districts, of those "dangerous classes" who gather beyond the gates? Revolutionary homogeneity just barely survives in compulsory military service and universal suffrage.

It is maintained to a much greater extent in the socialist system. This time, everything in the order of economic or political objective positions is obliterated. The factory manager and the party secretary general are comrades, and this atmosphere of comradeship continues even in the trials where it takes on a peculiar tone. A parallel with the great trials of 1793 is tempting. When Danton pleads his case with an enthusiasm that may sway the public, citizen Herman, president of the tribunal, cuts him short: "You are tired Danton. Rest up a bit before continuing." Is this not good comradeship?

Marxism distributes objectivity as the negative and the positive. Before the revolution there is only the objective: all discourse, except its own, is explained by class position, i.e., by the place occupied in the system of production. Subjectivity is impossible and it is merely the voice of commodities—except for the consciousness of the proletarian class, but the

23. *The Phenomenlogy of Mind.*
24. I take the liberty of italicizing Michelet.

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latter is not at all self-evident and must be defined by Party specialists in the light of science. But since the revolution destroys this baleful system, things are completely different under the new regime. There are only subjects who define themselves exclusively by their identification with the proletariat and the socialist nation. There are no directors; there are simply some comrades who seem more qualified than others to render certain services to the collectivity. A capitalist boss owns the factory whereas the proletariat has only his ability to work. A manager of a socialist factory has no property rights on the firm he directs in the name of all the people: he is but an authorized agent of socialist power which can fire him at any moment—e.g., if he turns out to be a bureaucrat.

Sustained by its Marxist ideology, the managing class of socialist countries prolongs that movement which characterizes the revolutionary apocalypse and consists in extricating the self from the differentiated social organization —precisely as Hegel described it. Society is supposed to be the work of the general will such as it is present in each person: everyone is required to regard oneself as the creator of the social world. On the other hand, it becomes necessary to annihilate what asserts itself as a single will or as a dissidence. Is it paying bureaucracy too much honor to regard it as the abstract self-consciousness Hegel discusses, "which destroys all difference and all subsistence of difference?"

Socialist society must live in intolerably bad faith—because the more it claims to be transparent, the more it is opaque, while bourgeois society, with the help of Marxism, recognizes its divisions. Having said that, Marxism, and even more Leninism, has merely adopted the bourgeois revolution's political thinking on one decisive point: they have simply attributed the general will to a particular class, but one which has a universal calling. They have substituted the comrade for the citizen as the proletariat was substituted for the "sovereign" in the *social contract* of which all are members. As a result, power and conflict become incomprehensible evils. How can one be opposed to oneself? Because otherwise one is the Other...

If we now reopen the *Communist Manifesto*, we can agree with Marx that a "varied hierarchy of social conditions" is found everywhere. After this, however, it becomes difficult to follow Marx on two fundamental points: that the class struggle is the confrontation between two camps, and that this struggle leads to its suppression. Again, Marxism acknowledges the class struggle only to negate it, and the officials in the provinces, who reassuredly claim that in their peaceful districts all live effectively in the same manner, are somehow ahead of Marx. This idea is merely an extrapolation from the revolutionary dream, and its consequences are annoying since, in order to deal with conflict, it is best to begin by acknowledging it.

To be sure, Marx's two hypotheses have their justification in the context of the 19th century. But in a society such as ours, we actually find a diversified hierarchy of social conditions and the proletariat that Marx described is today composed only of immigrant workers. The Communist Party is no longer that

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of workers but that of teachers. Moreover, the question of property must not eclipse that of power, and the relation of the State to civil society is not reducible to the class struggle. Class differences today seem to be part of a maze where cultural, religious and national differences, not to mention sexual differences, are equally important, whereas Marx prophesied the disappearance of nations and of nationalities at the same time that he celebrated this established fact of the bourgeoisie: the subordination of "barbaric" societies to industrial countries, or of the "brutalizing" country to the city. The least one can say is that the conditions of absolute rupture proclaimed by Marx, the new beginning of history as a result of the disappearance of strife and class contradictions, has yet to come about 130 years later.

Fusion has as its counterpart the destructive exclusion of otherness, exteriority and relativity. Rights reduce to measurement and to distance. The notion of *habeas corpus* acquires new meanings in terms of what can be said of the collective formation as a totalitarian entity: that the body is no longer the object of sacrifices, that its capacity for pleasure is no longer mutilated by offerings to divine love, that it is no longer subjected to the inert demands of labor, that it can assure the joys of existence—one trembles just outlining such a utopia.

Is this idea of rights likely to have a future? The West has long lived within the framework of Christianity. This system has entered into a crisis. Now at last two systems with analogous structures have developed: Marxism and psychoanalysis. Marxism is an ideology and an apparatus—and it does not matter whether or not it corresponds with what a certain Karl Marx wrote long ago in obscure books. It dominates half of the world. Psychoanalysis is far from having attained such success, but it lays claim to a certain moral empire. Yet, if we try to imagine what a society dominated by psychoanalytic ideology would be like, one is tempted to think that it would not be fun.

The Church said: the devil inspires your wrongdoing. Marxism says: your class position determines your specious ideology. And psychoanalysis: your defense mechanisms make you reject the truth. These three great institutional positions concerning the other and the negative are not mutually exclusive. The belated critique of Stalinism makes us forget fascism, which tries to articulate something like: your instincts are weakening, your race is degenerating. I will be excused for not having been informed of future totalitarian formulations. The interest shown by former Maoists in the intransigent Cardinal Lefebvre should provide some indication for the curious.

What matters is the principle of closure which results in the other being situated, understood, absorbed or digested. *Sin* consists then in rejecting religion, Marxism, psychoanalysis or the racist State. Sin is non-sense and the expression of a fundamentally evil nature. Yet, the institution goes a long way in teaching heretics their alienation and in pointing out the path to salvation: join the institution because it is ready to forgive, espouse its truth. You have to

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be possessed or crazy or still moved by inadmissible interests to refuse such a great blessing. Dissidents want to be rejected by a perfect society: such a wish confirms their masochism. It becomes necessary to take precautions with such perverts. This is how Soviet authorities approach therapy now and will in the future: dissidents are no longer traitors; they are abnormal persons who must be taken care of.

Such structures come from afar, and notably from the desire for them. It is unfair to blame them on metaphysicians, even if the philosophical need for coherence can be satisfied by the institution. One can question this accusation suddenly directed at recently idealized figures, this projection of guilt that encloses us once again in the universe of the trial: it is known that the persecutors' accusations lead to reflection. Yet, there is a tragic aspect of coherence, since it is deceptive and one could say unjust. But it is also imperative for me to order and coordinate my thoughts and to harmonize my behavior accordingly, since contradiction is inadmissible.

Furthermore, nothing prevents Marx or Freud or even Nietzsche from being right when they mention class interests, defense mechanisms or instinctual phases. The question does not relate to truth but to power (other than that if all are right then none are perfectly correct, that relativism takes its revenge, and democratic rules will have to be adopted to allow these incompatible entities to coexist). In this sense, one can say that Freud and Jung are both justified, without the matter becoming tragic. It may be that your theses are accurate and even shed light on my own behavior, Jung finally answers Freud, but you bother me.

Where can one take lessons on good behavior? The *cogito*, which does not mean at all the withdrawal into empirical individuality, contains minimal and essential politics: the Cartesian itinerary is another way of coming to terms with the other and with the negative. But can one tolerate what is implied by solitude, anguish and acceptance of death? Are we prepared to acknowledge "the infirmity of our nature" and to grasp its positive meaning?

It would then be a matter not of denying but of establishing divisions, e.g., the separation of powers. Marxism cannot envisage the separation of powers: the proletariat, representing the vast majority and even the whole of humanity, is constituted, i.e., unified, as a class in new economic and social structures that express a stage on the way to homogeneous society. Marxism's great hope, which today appears as a grand illusion, was that one class in society, the proletariat, is virtually the classless society. Thus, the Marxist State identifies itself with society, it is "the State for the whole people," as the Soviet Constitution put it, while the bourgeoisie accepts the relative independence of State and society. During a liberal regime the State can pass as the arbiter of conflicts occurring outside it. Thus, unlike the totalitarian State, it recognizes that it is not everything.

But let's close this by asking a few questions.

Can one conceive of an organization of non-exclusion? What can be expected from current doubts surrounding *convergence*—convergence of all

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the initiative and all the energies directed toward the Party and the Revolution, i.e., toward the reversal of the State (which proves to be its perfection), compounded by the erotic convergence on the leader and the ideal? Will we be able to rehabilitate the indulgent, in the face of the fanatics and the incorruptible? Can one conceive of radical transformation that would not be exterminating? Do the conditions exist for a new historical approach which would not claim to provide any total or final solution? Will we invent approaches likely to resolve conflicts without projecting guilt and without killing? Will we conquer violence? Can we? Do we want to? I haven't a clue, and in any case it would hardly make sense to answer yes or no. I restrict myself to intellectual labor directed toward modifying ways of thinking.

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CAPITALIST RESTORATION AND SOCIAL CRISIS IN YUGOSLAVIA*

by Antonio Carlo

The Bankruptcy of self-Management [1]

The necessary starting point in an analysis of Yugoslavia is the level of development of self-management. The 1973 law on collective work, the goal of which was to contain growing technocratic tendencies in the enterprises, has disciplined the powers of the "work units," the democratic cells which are directed from below (in practice, they are something similar to department assemblies) and which were supposed to provide the most authentic foundation for self-management.[2] These productive units can be compared to Western capitalist firms whose goal, as we know, it to strengthen control over production costs, increase economic efficiency, facilitate management and create a more congenial atmosphere for work. Thus, in our enterprises, these productive units do basic bookkeeping such as calculating production costs. Every worker has the opportunity to check directly the relevance of his work and that of his own firm. This method permits precise evaluation of each and every person's work and, consequently, the application of the principle of remuneration according to the chosen work. The work unit has the power to develop and adopt both its own plan (either through its council or directly) and its own disciplinary and organizational work rules."[3]

By the Yugoslav reformers' own admission, these "work units" have practically led to bankruptcy: "One must add, however, that this concept has not yet been adopted in all Yugoslav firms. According to the Federal Institute of Statistics, out of 8,114 enterprises examined, only 1,458 had in 1970 transferred certain decision-making rights to departments or to work units. From this viewpoint the situation differs for every firm. In the majority of cases,

*English translation by Susan Lo Bello

1. My earlier article on Yugoslavia, "L'Esperienza Jugoslava: dal Collettivismo Burocratico alla Restaurazione del Capitalismo," in *Terzo Mondo* 18 (Dec. 1972), pp. 47-74, puzzled some critics such as Banac (cf. his review of my book *La Natura Sociale dell'URSS*—published in English in *Telos*, 21 (Fall 1974), pp. 2-86—in *The Russian Review*, 1 [Jan. 1977], pp. 94ff) because it supposedly took no account of the important events which occurred after 1971. These events do not necessitate a revision of my analysis. Yet, it does not hurt to address the Yugoslav issue again because, lately, critics of state planning are looking favorably toward an alternative Yugoslav market socialism which minimizes the state's role and maximizes business autonomy. Cf. Pellicani's "Socialismo ed Economie di Mercato," in *Mondo Operaio* 6 (1977), pp. 69ff. and Serge Koln, *La Transition Socialiste* (Paris, 1977), as well as my review of the letter in *Telos*, 34 (Winter 1977-78), pp. 214-18. Cf. also P. Drouin, "Ni Pévir ni Tradir," in *Le Monde*, June 4, 1977; the anonymous review "Programme Commun et Transition au Socialisme," in *Repères*, p. 44ff. and C. Revel, "Point de vue sur le Dossier 'Programme Commun,'" in *Les Temps Modernes*, 370, pp. 1903ff.

2. Cf. F. Olivares, "Autogestione Jugoslava: 'Diritto all'Esperimento nell' Area Socialista," in *Quaderni Ceses*, 1-2 (1976), pp. 30-31.

3. M. Drulovic, *La Democrazia Autogestita* (Rome, 1977), pp. 77-78. For a more detailed description of the formal and institutional organization of self-management, see M. Rukavina's contribution in *La Démocratie Industrielle* (Paris, 1976), pp. 140ff.

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central and department workers councils, retained most decision-making rights. An investigation by the Confederation of Yugoslav Labor Unions revealed that in 6 percent of the firms the units did not directly decide on questions relating to work organization (obviously, in the area of self-management); in 23 percent they did not decide how to divide income, and in 9 percent the determination of personal income was left to workers councils. The situation is even worse in enterprises whose self-management structure has three levels: in 76 percent of these cases, the work units have no direct influence in profit sharing, and in 33 percent, they have no say over personal income levels. Here, the decisions are made by workers' representatives. *Thus, decision-making rights are essentially located at the level of workers councils.*"[4]

No less deficient has been the experience of the general assemblies, which bring together all workers from the firm or factory: "In Yugoslav practice, the assembly of the staff and of the entire firm is considered the most direct form of self-management. But it is fully applicable only in small collectives. According to present laws, the whole collective must discuss intermittent budgets, the final budget and the production plan five or six times a year. In large enterprises, on the other hand, it is deemed unnecessary to hold workers' general assemblies so often: in this type of firm it is rare for collectives to meet even once, either due to the large number of members, or to the requirements of work organization." [5]

Thus, general assemblies are not operative precisely in the most important enterprises, which, in addition to carrying out crucial functions, employ most of Yugoslavia's workers (in 1970 about 60 percent of the workers were employed in units with more than 1,000 dependents).[6]

Thus by the admission of the Yugoslav system's very own proponents and defenders, direct democracy does not work or works little or badly, in spite of an admitted workers' push in that direction.[7] What remain are organs of delegated democracy which, or course, are indispensable in the transition phase to socialism (no one has illusions that all decisions can be made without delegates) but which clearly manifest the tendency to separate themselves from the masses; to become power centers that do not represent the workers but the interests of a narrow elite contraposed to the working-class. Among these organs the workers council stands out as one which should be a sort of parliament for the enterprise, determining its general economic policy as well

4. Cf. Drulovic, *op. cit.*, p. 78 (italics added). On the work units' failure, cf. also Olivares. There is another institution of direct democracy: the referendum. But this hardly is developed. See Drulovic, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

6. Cf. M. Lavigne, *Le Economie Socialiste Europee* (Rome, 1975), p. 171.

7. Cf. Drulovic, *op. cit.*, p. 76. In my earlier article I pointed out, instead, the indifferent attitude of workers toward self-management. Now, these two attitudes express two real and contradictory reactions in the alienated character of self-management. In fact, one can respond in two ways to class domination by an elite: either with resignation and indifference or by trying to challenge their power. It is important to note, however, that every internal opposition to present self-management structures cannot succeed, as we shall see.

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as the distribution of income, its work organization, etc.[8] But the fact is that, just as elected assemblies in Western democracies are deprived of authority by top management, so does the working council run the risk of being put aside by narrower organs which "formally" have only executive powers, i.e., the management committee and the director.

"As a general rule the management committee meets once a week and is required to examine all proposals by members of work collectives, and to answer them within a month. In practice, the managing committee's influence is significant both in carrying out workers councils' decisions and in as far as it can submit proposals to them. The director *ex officio* belongs to the managing committee, but does not enjoy any particular right there... The director is naturally subject to the workers council's control, but his staff of technical collaborators, generally made up of experts, can take over the reins of power. There are examples of usurpation by technocrats: in such cases all important decisions are made by technical panels and by economists. This was particularly true after the implementation of amendment XV in the Federal Constitution, authorizing workers councils to elect one or more "business committees" in addition to the management committee. These business committees are always composed of experts selected from among the managers. This entails a certain danger. Yet the appearance of a technocracy seems inevitable in the search for a permanent balance between democracy and efficiency. The possibility of avoiding risks depends on the correct combination of modern management methods and self-management with the real power of self-management in every collective."[9] As to the composition of managing organs, it has been pointed out that: "in the proportion of productive laborers in the organs of management has decreased from 60% in 1968 to 55% in 1970... In management committees, production workers are less numerous than in workers councils: they compose about 23%. Technicians and office-workers are predominant. Technocratic usurpation is an everpresent danger in management committees. This is all the more so since, according to amendment XV, they can organize to accomplish in the best possible way their executive function concerning questions of ordinary administration. Management committees (or business committees, as they are sometimes called) tend increasingly to become technocratic congregations. There has always been an attempt to favor technocratic structures in management. Of course, Yugoslavia is still lacking in technicians and professionals. But the technocratic danger is increasingly apparent. It is clear that we will no longer be able to eliminate it by simply placing ourselves in the hands of the institutions."[10] Subsequent and more recent data on the composition of workers councils and management committees confirm that they are

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72, where there is a list of workers councils' formal powers. On p. 86 he points out, however, that in many cases these are the only formal powers and that in practice the councils ratify the decisions of the director and his staff.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 73-76.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

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dominated by representatives of a minority (elite) of members from business collectives: in 1972, 78.4% of workers council members and 88% of management committee members were made up of technicians and specialists.[11] This is normally justified by reference to the special competence of technicians, office-workers or specialists, but it is easy to object that a society defining itself as socialist must fight against inequalities and overcome privileges, even if only gradually. Of course, cultural inequality is not merely an abstraction but it corresponds in power differentials (in terms of firm management) and in income (the heads of firms are notorious for their higher incomes). In other words, culture, higher incomes and power are all concentrated in the same hands of a small elite from the firms' collectives. Nor can one object that the power always belongs to the workers collective, because if the organs of direct democracy do not work, it is clear that the power is concentrated at the level of delegated democracy where the elite's power emerges. Instead of destroying the unequalizing tendencies inherited from capitalism self-managed "socialism" recreates them within the institutions of a self-styled workers' democracy. Faced with this extremely dangerous reality, work units are created (meant as a counterweight to technocratic tendencies), but they do not work. Rather, they legitimate the construction of business committees (with a constitutional amendment) which do work, but in a manner which troubles even the very Yugoslav reformists.

It is necessary to ask at this point whether there is a case of atrophy of the organs of direct democracy on the one hand and of aggressive and technocratic functioning of business committees and directorships on the other, which have resulted in the elite's already secure control of workers councils and management committees.

The set of phenomena labeled "technocratic degeneration" does not express a degeneration nor a partial characterization of Yugoslav self-management, but is its true and basic nature. With the 1965 reforms, all power was decentralized to enterprises operating according to commerical criteria, with the plan being reduced to a mere complex of non-binding information and suggestions (as in the West). From that point on enterprises have had to act according to "economic" criteria: the enterprise's main guiding factor became production for the maximization of the difference between costs and returns. When such an objective was missing, the enterprise closed down.[12] No longer do binding central plans exist. Each enterprise has exclusive control over its own decisions and can reject its former plan.[13] In such a system there can be no self-management.[14]

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11. See Olivares, *op. cit.*, p. 29. It has been repeatedly observed how self-managing organs have become the elite's hunting grounds. See, for example, the articles by S. Bruno and F. Ferrarotti in *Fabbrica e Società* (Milan, 1972).

12. See Drulovic, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-28. Theoretically work would have to be found for unemployed workers following closing, but this remains purely hypothetical, given the gravity of the unemployment problem.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 237.

14. It has been pointed out repeatedly that it is either impossible or extremely difficult to

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Worker self-management usually means a web of organs run by workers who make decisions on the basis of workers' interests which are considered social interests par excellence.[15] In a country like Yugoslavia with an unemployment problem, as well as emigration and agricultural underdevelopment, it is in the workers' interest to eliminate these problems which generate serious hardships for the workers and enormous social costs for the country. Yet, if the individual enterprise invested in backward areas (which are the central core of the above-mentioned problems) in order to create new jobs, its investment returns would be very low. Investing in underdevelopment yields little or nothing in terms of actual monetary flows and thus it is more convenient to invest in rich republics—such as Slovenia and Croatia—forcing workers to migrate to rich republics as well as abroad. Furthermore, these investments tend to use relatively capital-intensive techniques which are more efficient and employ only a small work-force. In this way the enterprise forces society to bear the costs of its decisions such as increases in unemployment and extensions accentuation of regional imbalances, through the so-called process of externalizing costs. This, however, is not a problem for the enterprise since such costs do not fall within its own budget whose main goal is to make profits. In other words, profits go to the enterprise, while the consequences of unemployment and regional imbalances fall on society. Nor can it be otherwise, for if an enterprise sacrifices its profits for the realization of social goals, in this type of economy the consequence can only be the closing down of the enterprise.

In such an economy global social interests, on which workers' self-management should be based, cannot be realized as the dominant interests guiding economic development, since they are subordinated to the attainment of profits in every enterprise. Since the underlying interests on which workers' self-management should be based cannot be expressed, it is therefore logical that the organs which should concretely realize these interests do not function: thus, we have the atrophy of the organs of direct democracy (workers'

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realize self-management merely on the enterprise level without a minimum of central and binding objectives. See the contributions by Bellasi, La Rosa and Pellicciari in *Fabbrica e Società, op. cit.*; L. Tommasetta, *Partecipazione e Autogestione* (Milano, 1972), pp. 211ff. and J. Kosta, *Socialistische Planwirtschaft* (Oplanden, 1974), p. 217. This type of criticism is not only limited to the intellectual realm. It is significant that it is becoming apparent even among workers. For example, a group of Portuguese workers wrote in a June-July 1975 document on workers' control (concerning which there has been a very interesting debate in Portugal): "If control on the level of the enterprise is important as a direct expression of workers' power, the workers know that only at the global level can the capitalist system's effects be attacked. Only at the global level can the national economy be reoriented. Only at the global level can imperialist dependency be fought. Only at the global level can the economic struggle be coordinated with the workers' political struggle." See F. Patriarca, "Controlo Operario em Portugal," Part I, *Andlise Social*, 47, p. 777.

15. This is the concept commonly referred to as "self-management." It should not be confused with "co-management," which instead implies the existence of explicit capitalist relations. The problem is that in Yugoslav self-management, a formally rejected capitalism has been reproduced in practice, making market-self-management and co-management practically synonymous. See D. Chauvey, *L'Autogestione Un'Utopia?* (Rome, 1975), pp. 54-55, where, however, the phenomenon's structural causes are not adequately examined.

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assemblies, work units) and the technocratic degeneration of the organs of delegated democracy (workers councils, management and business committees, directorship). This does not mean that workers' self-management cannot exist, but only that it has to be all-encompassing in the sense that it has to proceed from the macro-economic level (global socio-economic decisions) to then include individual enterprises.[16] But self-management limited only to the factory and which leaves the total economy at the mercy of the dictates of the market (i.e., production for profit in the specific Yugoslav case) is not a 50% partial self-management, but a 10% phony self-management, in which the working class is alienated in the sense that it works and produces, but does not control the productive process run and regulated by opposed interests.

Thus, the economic dynamic of the Yugoslav system takes on much the same shape of capitalist dynamics: enterprises operate for profit and not for social goals. If workers wished to impose their own social goals different from those of profit, the firms would have to close down. Hence, Yugoslav enterprises cannot be directed by workers but by someone else. Who? Clearly, this "who" cannot be but the other social group present in the enterprise: the technicians and managers. This social group already existed in Yugoslavia as a socially privileged group since the time of centralized planning. In that phase, however, they were a politically subaltern group whose job was to carry out the plan decided by the central political bureaucracy within individual enterprises. Since then, they have taken advantage of the growing difficulties of the central bureaucratic plan to advance their own claims to power. Thus, they found their ideal model in a market economy model where the plan decides nothing and the firm everything. Once the plan was deprived of all authority (central political bureaucracy), with the working class managing nothing, power could only concentrate in the hands of those who, because of culture and superior competence, could interpret the laws and needs of the market for the firm: the managers.[17] The market economy established with the 1965 reforms differs from a capitalist one only in an exterior feature: the absence of hereditary rights on the part of managers over goods formally belonging to the enterprises. But, in effect, such a difference concerns the

16. Even Yugoslav Leftist critics have pointed out that self-management on the enterprise level within a commercial framework is false and destabilizing. Thus, Markovic writes: "An atomized, disintegrated society, lacking necessary coordination and conscious regulation, would be at the mercy of blind, alienated social forces. Self-management is surely not the absence of any management and conscious direction within the society as a whole." Cf. M. Markovic, "Basic Issues of Self-Management," in *Praxis*, 12 (1974), p. 94. See also G. Petrovic, "Socialismo Burocratico?" in *Aut Aut*, 145-146, pp. 43ff.

17. The fact that managers and technocrats, at least in 1970, were not yet the majority in workers councils does not mean anything because the structural situation produces a marginal working class reduced merely to ratifying the decisions of the formal executive organs. Besides, with the presence of skilled workers, there develops a vaste majority among technicians, white collar workers and an elite of skilled workers. It is unnecessary to point out that skilled workers who enjoy more stable jobs and higher income (their work is more in demand) are easily coopted in an alliance with managers. The sweeping 1965 reform, in fact, sacrificed the lesser skilled workers who were more adapted to the preceding extensive development. Also, the large scale employment of material incentives favors skilled workers whose productivity is higher. Thus, there are objective bases for an alliance.

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particular way in which wealth is passed on: it is a characteristic of circulation and not of production. It is a superstructural and not a structural phenomenon. This is not surprising: the perfection of a socio-historical formation at the superstructural level can take as long as a century. What needs to be stressed is that the manager, i.e., the director and his collaborators in the management or business committees, acts as the owner of the business' property in the sense that he uses it for his own class interests. This is not all that different from the situation of Western manager-shareholders. Although the latter can formally appropriate the enterprise's property by transferring his shares to his own heirs, he still has to reinvest a large part of the profits as necessitated by competition and by the expanded reproduction of capital.[18] The portion that is left him for private consumption may very well be a small fraction of the total profit, but this "little" amount is extremely high in absolute value, and guarantees him an extremely high consumption and personal income (that which is not reinvested in the enterprise). Similarly, Yugoslav managers, both in terms of their reinvestment of a portion of the profits in the enterprise and in therms of their personal income and consumption, enjoy a position of privilege which is largely a result of the powers obtained with the 1965 reform.

To reiterate, the only difference is in the way of transference of wealth as the source of power and of the privileged high personal income and consumption. In the West, wealth is transferred through inheritance; in Yugoslavia it is tied to prominent positions within a firm, and it is lost or gained with them. There is no difference in how wealth is managed or produced. This anomaly derives from the particular character of Yugoslav capitalist property born out of the ruins of a bureaucratic collectivist system in which private capitalist property did not exist and an open and complete restoration of capitalism would have had unpredictable and incalculable consequences. Thus, the restoration is gradual: first there is the re-establishment of capitalist structural functioning, and later its completion on the superstructural level. This completion is indeed taking place, as can be seen by the giant strides that formal and legal recognition of private property is making at the production level. With the 1971 constitutional amendments, the incidence of private property has notably increased—so much so that in 1972, 25% of the accumulation of capital came from that sector, while 30% came from social undertakings and 45% from the State and banks (the banks'

18. J. Wilczynski lists in his *L'Economia dei Paesi Socialisti* (Bologna, 1973), pp. 67-69, the various differences between Western and Eastern profit (after the 1965 reforms). That is true for East European countries, but not for Yugoslavia where, aside from the marginal difference of heriditary rights, everything functions as in the West: profit is the enterprise's main goal. It can be increased with monopolist price-fixing, and it determines the allocation of investments (in the sense that the poorer regions with lower profit rates are practically deserted by capital). As for foreign investment, which, according to Wilczynski, socialist countries make for altruistic and not profitable ends, it needs only to be pointed out that if Yugoslav firms operated abroad without criteria of profitability, the country would run the risk of not balancing the budget. In that case, it would end up first in a controlled administration, and subsequently in liquidation—exactly as in the West. See Drulovic, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-79.

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function, however, is much more important than that of the State.)[19] Thus, the private sector has been growing almost to the level of associated labor. After more than 30 years of "socialism," this is not a laudable result.

The Problem of Unemployment

With the 1965 reforms, capitalism was restored in Yugoslavia. In analyzing this state of affairs, let us begin with unemployment, which is one of the most painful and visible stigmas of dependent capitalism. Today the number of unemployed in Yugoslavia is 600,000, while, according to the 1971 census, there were 671,200 emigrants.[20] But the census in question counts only workers temporarily abroad. If one includes those who live abroad permanently, the number is up to a million people in 1970.[21] As for the underemployed, there are no exhaustive estimates from Yugoslav sources; however, Drulovic has pointed out that there are over 1.3 million workers in agriculture alone—which may be indicative of hidden unemployment (underemployment).[22] From the incomplete available data it turns out that underemployed, unemployed and emigrants constitute about 2.6 million in a population of about 21 million of which 10 are presumably capable of working[23] Drulovic himself points out that employment oscillates from one employed out of every three persons in rich republics, to one out of ten in poor regions such as Kossovo: a situation of serious underdevelopment.[24] The situation is even worse if one takes into account that between 1945 and 1969 the average rate of increase in employment was 8.9% a year.[25] As all averages, however, this one can also be misleading since most of the growth occurred before the 1965 reforms. In the first two years after the reforms, growth was blocked and 100,000 jobs were eliminated. Consequently, in 1968 there was a record increase in emigration. Clearly, with their economic criteria, the reforms have reversed the trend and the Yugoslav reformists themselves sadly admit that full employment today is an objective outside Yugoslavia's range of possibilities, and that a country administered according

19. See V. M. Hanzekovic, "Poscritto," to R. Bicanic, *La Via Jugoslava al Socialismo* (Napoli, 1976), p. 293, where it is noted that although during the period 1953-64 the socio-political community furnished the enterprises with 57.6% of their investments and the banks only 0.9%, in 1970 the figures were completely reversed: 5.2% compared to 51.1%. The state is thus made completely marginal on the investment front. As for banks, after the reform they function according to commercial criteria. Whereas before they could be founded only by socio-political communities, now they can also be established by economic enterprises as in the West. The enormous weight of the banks (and of joint commercial enterprises with foreigners which centralize large amounts of capital) disturbs even some of the Yugoslavs. See Rukavina, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

20. See P. Yankovitch, *L'Année Economique et Sociale* (Paris, 1977), p. 66. See also Olivares, *op. cit.*, p. 26; and Drulovic, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

21. See Banca Commerciale Italiana, *Il Portolano del Mondo Economico. Paesi Socialisti* (Roma, 1972), p. 187.

22. See Drulovic, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

23. Of course, to the underemployed agricultural workers one could add the underemployed from other sectors, and the data concerning emigration is also presumably incomplete.

24. See Drulovic, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 240-43.

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to economic criteria cannot allow its employment to grow too rapidly.[26]

Here the absurdity of a logic that places the firms' balance sheets at the center of an economy is clearly revealed.[27] From this viewpoint it is "economical" to produce more and employ less, and make the costs of this policy (unemployment, emigration, imbalances) fall on society. It so happens, however, that this policy entails earnings for individual enterprises, but enormous costs for society in the form of loss of real wealth.[28] There are no estimates of these costs for Yugoslavia, but it is clear that high unemployment has been enormously wasteful for society as a whole. An economy using criteria which produce unemployment is anything but a model of rationality.[29] In Yugoslavia, the 1965 decision to grow industrially on the bases of the domination of profit within a country whose industrial structure was barely developed (in spite of the success during the period 1950-60) and whose occupational level was relatively modest[30] could only lead to disastrous consequences. The use of predominantly capital-intensive techniques and of labor-saving criteria could only result in a reduction in already low occupational levels. This precipitates a decrease in demand which fails to support economic development and therefore does lead to the reabsorption of the unemployed—and so on in a vicious circle.[31]

Thus, Yugoslavia has experienced the same phenomenon that has plagued underdeveloped capitalist economies such as Southern Italy or South America, where there have been attempts at profit-based capitalist industrialization through the employment of capital-intensive technologies which have only resulted in growing unemployment and imbalances.[32] For seven or eight years now this job situation has become serious even in highly developed capitalist countries where the logic of profit maximization (produce more with fewer laborers) is creating an untenable employment

26. *Ibid.*, p. 245.

27. Also indicative is that the long-term social plan foresaw an annual labor force increase of only 3% up to 1975. As can be seen, planning in a mercantile economy ends up being only a passive extrapolation of market tendencies. If the latter abruptly slow down, the plan (which is not binding) responds accordingly. The market is what decides; the "plan" is only its passive reflection.

28. Thus, in the U.S. it has been calculated that from 1953 to 1970 unemployment caused a loss of 45 million man-years of work for the country—which amounts to 1.8 trillion in 1970 dollars. See H. Sherman, *Stagflation* (New York, 1978), pp. 5-6.

29. It is indicative that Yugoslav reformers use the same language as capitalist economists. For the latter, absolute economic rationality coincides with capitalist rationality. For Yugoslav economists also there is no distinction between the two.

30. Employment levels were still low in the middle sixties: there were only 1,360,000 people employed in industry out of a population of about 20 million. See R. Bicauié, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

31. The use of predominantly capital-intensive technologies has only been partial since Yugoslavia has certainly not succeeded in developing an advanced technological structure. Its development is generally semi-intensive and thus hardly competitive. This semi-intensity has been sufficient, however, to depress already low employment levels. Cf. M. Hanzekovic, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

32. On this point concerning Southern Italy, see E. M. Capacelatro and A. Carlo, *Contro la Questione Meridionale* (Rome, 1975), pp. 205ff.; concerning South America (Brasil in particular), see D. Senghars, *Weltwirtschaftordernung und Entwicklungspolitik, Plädoyer für Dissoziation* (Frankfurt, 1977), pp. 118ff.

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situation as Pollock had predicted in his well-known book on automation.[33] Yugoslavia happened to choose the capitalist road just when capital began to show its inability to resolve the employment problem not only in poor areas where this problem has never been resolved but also in rich countries. Yugoslavia's bankruptcy in employment is not a result of the use of "economic" criteria but of the use of *capitalist* economic criteria which entail enormous social costs and the most irrational waste of wealth possible: the waste of labor-power.

Inflation and the Trade Deficit

With the 1965 policy the Yugoslavian consumer has had to get used to living with a high rate of inflation.[34] During recent years the rate of inflation was 20% in 1975 and 10% (13% according to other estimates) in 1976—and this reduction in the inflation rate was paid for with serious economic stagnation.[35] As in Western countries, inflation is an incurable evil, and to reduce it a couple of points it is necessary to decisively curb the pace of development. There is nothing odd in such economic behavior: it was predictable that the logic of profit would trigger those behaviors which result in the profit maximization typical of a monopoly capitalist economy. Most important of these behaviors are the monopolists' agreements on prices, which proliferated right after the reform and which are the main source of inflation.[36] In this regard, the Yugoslav economy was inclined toward development of such monopolistic agreements during the middle 1960s because in the administrative period the planned centralization of the economy had favored the centralization of productive activity: thus, before World War II only 33 industrial enterprises employed more than 1,000 men, while in 1963 there were 297; on the other hand, the number of enterprises employing fewer than 60 people was 1654, but had been reduced to 335 in 1963.[37] This process continued even after the reforms so that in 1970, as we have seen, about 60% of industrial workers were employed in businesses with more than a thousand dependents, and 3.3% of firms accounted for almost half of total industrial production. The development of Yugoslav industrial centralization, however, is completely anomalous. According to Western criteria, Yugoslavia should be a country with an exceptionally competitive economy since centralization and international competitive capacity normally go hand in hand and centralization in Yugoslavia exceeds even that in the United States.[38] Yet, for Yugoslavia, American economic competitiveness

33. See F. Pollock, *Antomazione* (Torino, 1970).

34. Prices rose 18% in 1966, 3% in 1967, 4% in 1968, 17% in 1969, 10.5% in 1970, and 16.7% in 1971. For the data dealing with the 1966-69 period, see M. Hanzekovic, *op. cit.*, p. 288; for those dealing with the 1970-1971 period, see M. Lavigne, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

35. See P. Jankovitch, *op. cit.*

36. For a fuller discussion of this problem, see my "Imperialism, Monopolies and Inflation," in *Telos*, 34 (Winter 1977-78), pp. 89-110.

37. See R. Bicanic, *op.cit.*, p. 110.

38. At the beginning of the 1970s in the U.S., those productive units having 100 to 1,000 workers constituted 43% of industrial workers. See L. Caselli, "Intervento," in *Atti del Convegno*

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remains a dream. This contradiction is explained by Yugoslavia's particular history, in which monopolist-capitalist development came about on top of an industrial base which had already been largely centralized and inherited from the preceding bureaucratic-collectivist system.

In a bureaucratic-collectivist system the centralization of productive units is not due to capitalist causes. In fact, bureaucratic collectivism is characterized by a generally extensive development, based on high employment of labor-power with respect to invested capital.[39] The centralization of productive units was essentially the result of the guidelines set for the economy by the plan and by the related need to reduce the number of productive units to allow the plan to function efficiently. In fact, an increase in the number of firms also increases the problems of bookkeeping and the complexity of the planned system, thereby making its operation more difficult and less efficient.[40] In a capitalist system, on the other hand, industrial centralization is largely the result of capital's tendency to make capital-intensive investments demanding an enormous concentration of capital and technology. Therefore, in the capitalist system, centralization is the consequence of intensive development with advanced technology while in bureaucratic collectivism centralization is the result of other causes and is connected instead to labor-intensive development with a low productivity and technology. In the latter case it is more a matter of concentrating labor-power than capital. After the 1965 reforms, the Yugoslav economy inherited this type of centralization—an unnatural one from the capitalist viewpoint since it took place in a context of low productivity and low-level technology, thus completely uncompetitive. This anomalous and hardly competitive concentration, however, allows a smaller number of firms to achieve monopolistic price-fixing agreements: a reduced number of enterprises controlling a considerable part of marketed products is the ideal condition favoring oligopolistic agreements thus fattening profits. Given the Yugoslav

sulla Piccola e Media Industria (Torino, 1973), p. 112. This means that the remaining 57% was divided among very small units (up to 100 workers) and very large ones. During the same period in Yugoslavia, about 60% of all workers worked only in large units.

39. We must be clear on this point: in fact it is often said that Eastern European countries have extremely high investment rates, and thus high capital intensive development. (See, for example, Lavigne, *op. cit.*, pp. 247ff. At p. 222, however, it is pointed out that, at least during the first phase, Soviet development was extensive.) On the other hand, labor productivity and technological development are very modest. See my "The Socio-Economic Nature of the USSR," *op. cit.* As for the technological backwardness of Eastern countries compared to capitalist Europe, see J. Wilczynski, *Technology in Comecon* (London, 1974). This means that in order to obtain a certain product it is necessary to employ much more labor-power with respect to invested capital than in the West: in that sense, Eastern European development is extensive, even if the amount of investment with respect to national income is high. During the bureaucratic collective period, the same thing was true in Yugoslavia: pilot investments employed large amounts of capital and employed an agricultural labor-power, with low skills and low productivity. Thus, according to Bicanic, *op. cit.*, p. 110 and 128, instead of an agricultural overpopulation (hidden unemployment) there came into being an industrial overpopulation.

40. This is not simply a Yugoslav phenomenon but is common among Eastern European countries. For example, it was recently calculated that in Hungary, about three-fourths of industrial labor-power is employed in units with more than 1,000 workers. See Y. Barreto, "Gestao Economica e Poder Operario na Hungaria," in *Análise Social*, 45, p. 77.

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industrial structure, it was logical that, having chosen the road to profit, it resulted in the development of oligopolistic price-fixing. Thus, Yugoslavia has ended up with all of the disadvantages of monopoly capitalist development (inflation) without any of its advantages (advanced technological development).

This situation is aggravated by the fact that after 1965 Yugoslavia chose a policy of development largely integrated within the world market. This participation in the world market has meant participating in the inflationary tendencies stemming from the world market itself, which entail a price evolution out of Yugoslavia's control and largely determined by multinational monopolies' maneuverings in the world market.[41] The Yugoslav legislators have even formally accepted this reality with the law of May 1972 which fulfills and consolidates the process of mercantilization of price by sanctioning that international prices must reflect price fluctuations on the world market.[42] In other words, inflationary pulls emanating from the world market find in the Yugoslav industrial oligopolistic structure an ideal transmission channel. Of course, even after the '72 law, the state can intervene (and does) with controls and price freezes. But these controls have never succeeded in market economies (and the Yugoslav case seems to be no exception, given its inflation rate) since in order to stop the inflationary spiral it is not enough to control prices. One must eliminate its causes which, however, are structurally rooted within the monopoly system and are thus irremovable.[43]

A further cause of inflation is the balance of payments deficit which is endemic and growing.[44] During recent years the situation has been the following: In 1975 there has been a 2.8-billion-dollar trade deficit and a balance of payments deficit of 1 billion; in 1976 the trade deficit has been 1.7 billion dollars, with 300 million dollars surplus in the balance of payments. Thus, maintaining a proper balance of payments has required invisible ruses, such as contributions from Yugoslav emigrants (1.6 billion dollars in 1976) and tourism. In addition to creating great dependence on foreign countries,[45] these measures are certainly not sufficient to solve Yugoslav

41. Typical of this is the recent case of oil prices. See my "The Oil Crisis and Underdevelopment," in *Telos*, 31 (Spring 1977), pp. 5-34.

42. See Lavigne, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

43. See my "Imperialism, Monopolies and Inflation," *op. cit.* Article 19 in the 1965 law forbade functions and associations contrary to general interests (see Lavigne, *op. cit.*, p. 151). Yet, the anti-trust declarations of the law are incapable of blocking natural monopoly capitalist market dynamics. Prices freezes and anti-monopolistic positions are ignored and ridiculed in practice. The state itself has made a series of decisions whose effect was to sustain the inflationary spiral: thus, after the great reform, in order to favor the development of the construction industry based on profit criteria, the policy of low rents was abandoned. See Tomasetta, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

44. See Hanzekovic, *op. cit.*, pp. 300-301, where data is provided and the author notes with (cautious) honesty that the reforms have ended in "relative failure."

45. That the money sent home by emigrants is a source of dependency is well-known, because its volume depends on the cycle of the country importing workers. As for tourism, the situation is less clear. In fact, up to recently it was argued that it was beneficial to a country's development.

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economic problems: in 1976, for example, the reduction in the trade deficit (1.7 billion dollars, compared with 2.8 in the preceding year) was a result of internal industrial stagnation (which increased by only 3%—one of the lowest rates since the war) permitting an 8% reduction in imports. Clearly at the first sign of recovery industries will again begin importing high-technology and high-priced goods not adequately produced by Yugoslavia, thus reversing the precarious 1976 reduction.

The problem of Yugoslavia's balance of trade and the increasingly serious trade deficit is linked to the 1965 policy to become integrated into the world market. The objective of this policy was to acquire Western technology. But this technology is expensive and the goods that Yugoslavia can offer in exchange are low-technology and low-priced ones. This has triggered the phenomenon of unequal exchange which the Yugoslavs had already known during the centralized planning phase when there was only limited trade with the world market.[46] The economy did not hold up, and between 1965 and 1973 the Yugoslavs have had to devaluate the dinar four times—two of which followed the devaluation of the dollar. These devaluations have had negative repercussions (inflation) on the internal price-system without thereby eliminating the problem of the balance of payments. The fact is that the elimination of the trade imbalance can happen only if the Yugoslav economy manages to break its structural ties and make provision for adequate industrial development, which is unthinkable without resolving the employment problem.

Multinationals and National Dependence

The decision to become integrated into the world market was undertaken by the Yugoslavs in full: it became receptive not only of goods, technology and consumer models from the West, but also of Western capital. Already in 1971 the Yugoslav state legislative organs launched even more liberal reforms which sanctioned complete freedom in exporting profits.[47]

Such benevolent fiscal legislation is typical of underdeveloped countries who are in a weak situation vis-à-vis rich countries.[48] It almost amounted to the concession of franchises to Western corporations since the Yugoslav

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Some have even postulated a new multiplier in addition to those filling existing economic manuals: the tourist multiplier. Today these illusions are over, and it has been shown that tourism indeed produces employment, but that it is seasonal and thus precarious and unstable: it is a typical kind of underemployment in an underdeveloped country, which furthermore promotes the inflationary spiral and land speculation. See "Ou vont le Bénefices du Tourisme," in *Economia*, 12, pp. 68ff. Thus, for Yugoslavia tourism represents a weak factor precisely in the areas of inflation and unemployment—the weak points in the country's economy. The advantage derived from tourism is heavily paid for.

46. See Hanzekovic, *op. cit.*, p. 301, where it is shown that the balance of payments deficit went from 1,770 million dinars in 1964 to 6,460 million dinars in 1970 (before and after the reform), paralleling the very well-known increase in trade abroad. Opening up to the world market increases the volume of trade, and without continual devaluations makes the weight of the deficit untenable.

47. See Drulovic, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

48. See J. Wilczynski, *The Multinationals and East-West Relations* (London, 1976), p. 112.

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government pledged, in its dealings, not to alter existing legislation relative to foreign investments in ways detrimental to them after the signing of cooperation contracts.[49] This amounts to a limitation on the political and legislative sovereignty in dealings with the foreign investor. It is no less serious than that imposed on Czechoslovakia by tanks in 1968. On the other hand, it is clear that if Yugoslavia decided to expropriate foreign members of their enterprises and employ their technologies, it would provoke heavy reprisals in the world market: no multinational would ever come to Yugoslavia again. Yugoslavs are aware of this, so they guarantee foreign investments with limitations on their own sovereignty.

To criticisms of this type the Yugoslavs respond in two ways: a) the country was short on capital and it needed foreign cooperation to develop; b) capitalist members are allowed only minority participation (up to 49%).[50] The first argument is surprisingly similar to that used by bourgeois theorists of development in poor countries: without the cooperation of rich countries, "poor" ones cannot develop. It is an argument based on the rich ones' altruism and the poor ones' dependency: in fact, however, this altruistic cooperation produces only dependency and aggravates the poor countries' situation. Foreign investments do not generate development but submission, and in the Yugoslav case this is apparent even on the legislative level.

As for the second argument, it is practically unnecessary to point out that through the concession of patents and licenses it is quite possible to acquire the control of a company without spending a penny—a normal situation between rich and poor countries. In this way it is possible to retain control of an enterprise by spending only a minimum of capital: in other words, the majority member takes on most of the rise, and the minority member, thanks to its economic strength, becomes boss by laying out only a small share of capital and thus taking on little risk.

That this is what takes place in Yugoslavia is pointed out by Jozef Wilczynski: "Although in Yugoslavia workers' councils are normally vested with large powers in the management of enterprise, the 1971 and 1973 legislative amendments provide for the limitation of their authority in joint ventures with a view of attracting more foreign investors.... In joint venture contracts with Yugoslav enterprises the Western partner may now insist that certain powers of the Workers' Councils (vested with almost absolute powers in enterprises) be transferred to the venture's 'Management Board.' Although in joint ventures (in Hungary, Rumania and Yugoslavia) Western partners are limited to minority ownership, in management they usually have an equal voice, i.e., they have the power of veto in all major decisions.... In general, Socialist enterprises are in a weaker bargaining position when confronted with large Western companies. Complaints have been made of intolerant and

49. See Drulovic, *op. cit.*; and Wilczynski, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-70, where it is pointed out that there is an insurance company (based in London and Zagrab) that extends guarantees to Western investors.

50. See Drulovic, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

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domineering attitudes where the multinationals try to reduce Socialist partners to less profitable and less sophisticated forms of production and a subordinate position in general. A good deal of publicity was recently given in Yugoslavia to the fact that in a joint venture with the Unis of Sarajevo, for the production of bearings, its Swedish partner (Svenska Kullagerfabriken)— although holding only 22% of the capital— in fact managed the venture in the way it pleased, disregarding the Yugoslav partner."[51]

Yugoslav sources deplore the seriousness of the situation in even stronger terms. Augustin Papic in the journal of the League of Communists points out: "Finally, through industrial and scientific-technical coperation, through the importation of licenses and equipment, through foreign financing, our economy has established very close relations even with multinational corporations. These relations have become concretized through common investments with foreign enterprise. But one must not lose sight of the risks and dangers resulting from cooperation with foreign capital, especially with multinational companies. Exploitation in the area of prices, deliveries, supplies, the inadequate quality of technology, the difficult conditions for obtaining financing, the restrictions in foreign markets, the tendency to consolidate their position within our internal market: these are but some of the problems that our economy is up against. It is hardly necessary to mention our oil industry's negative experience while tied to the multinationals: a tie which has prevented our direct cooperation with oil-producing countries. It is typical that our workers and our self-managing organs, and even the organs of the federation and republics, as well as of the provinces and town councils, are not sufficiently informed about the results of this cooperation, and that there are not adequate controls over it. From this viewpoint there is a serious problem in the sector of joint investments. The results obtained in this area have hitherto been modest. But we find even more serious gaps in our lack of knowledge of these results. The federal organs have data concerning concluded agreements, but it seems that no one in the country has data on how joint investments' final aims are being achieved."[52]

Clearly, the minority partner completely deprives the majority partner of all authority: mixed Yugoslav enterprises cannot decide anything important against the foreign partners' wishes who impose business policies contrary to national Yugoslav interests. Even the minimum precondition for exercizing some public control such as information is lacking. This situation is the result of the 1965 policy whose extreme consequence was to integrate Yugoslavia into the world market.

When one chooses the capitalist road and becomes integrated into an economic sphere characterized by ferocious competition (the world market),

51. See Wilczynski, *op.cit.*, pp. 112, 163, 166.

52. See A. Papic, "Le Compagnie Multinazionali," in *Quaderni Ceses,* 11 (1973), p. 831. This is a translation of an article that appeared in the December 1973 issue of *Kommunist,* the theoretical organ of the League of Communists. As for the price exploitation that Papic mentions, it refers to price hikes of 25-30% with respect to the world market, which contributes considerably to the Yugoslav trade deficit.

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the problem emerges of rapidly developing a technology and a productive structure which are competitive in capitalist terms. It must be done rapidly, otherwise one is overwhelmed and pushed aside by the ferocious competition. For a country with little capital and a poor technological base, exposed almost all at once to stormy competition, acting quickly can only mean turning to large foreign companies and asking them for contracts of cooperation so as to rapidly acquire the necessary technology. (To attempt to develop an autochthonous technological level similar to advanced capitalism's would require so much time and capital that the country would remain behind in the road to development.) The catch is that, while it is vital for Yugoslavia to acquire this technology in a short time, Yugoslavia is merely one of many investment possibilities for the multinationals: this little country, which finds itself in competition with other poor countries operating under similar conditions, will be selected only if it offers very favorable conditions. For the one, it is a matter of survival, while for the other, it is simply a question of one among many possible good business deals. The disproportionality in the contractual relation explains the Yugoslavs' extraordinary series of legislative concessions (liberalization of exporting profits, change in the rules of self-management, limitation of legislative sovereignty in relation to foreign investors, etc.) let alone the Yugoslavs' acceptance to purchase second-rate technology which for them still constitutes progress.[53] Thus, while the gains are very limited, the price is enormous: Yugoslavia does not become competitive, but progressively more indebted to foreign countries. The country becomes increasingly weakened economically and evermore subject to political blackmail.

Integration into the world market is a failure and one of the causes of the absolute anarchy reigning in the Yugoslav productive system where central planning exists only on paper and even company programs operate within extreme levels of unpredictability.[54] There is practically no effective planning on the level of the firm, and the best results (in the sense of being less disastrous) are obtained by small and medium-sized firms which notoriously operate only on the fringes of the market, i.e., in limited and local situations which are buffered from the world market's fluctuations.

53. In other words, in neo-colonial countries, Yugoslavia receives a dependent and second-class technology, which was enough to make it internationally non-competitive. However, it is still a capital-intensive technology, even though obsolete and second-class, so that it contributes to an increase in unemployment. Furthermore, as Lavigne points out (*op. cit.*, p. 155), two-thirds of foreign investments are made in rich regions (Croatia and Slovenia) which thus contributes to and intensifies regional imbalances (this is because it is generally more profitable to invest in rich areas).

54. As Drulovic put it (*op. cit.*, pp. 225-26): "According to an investigation conducted in enterprises comprising more than 60% of all workers and yielding about 60% of total industrial production, more than 50% of these firms in 1968 and 1969 did not have their own development programs, and when they did have them, they did not cover more than one or two years maximum. In addition, only 30% of programs had been completely realized, while 60% had been realized only in part. From this viewpoint, the best results had been obtained by small and medium-sized enterprises (those with up to 500 workers); large firms were elaborating their programs to meet the requirements of the national and world markets."

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As for the large firms, their integration within the world market exposes them to its fluctuations, thereby making it more difficult for them to carry out their own plans. The largest firms, those which should function as guides within the economy, react as twigs in a storm. One might ask why such disastrous policies have been adopted: the 1965 mercantile policy could have been realized in a different manner, i.e., under solid customs barriers (protectionism). Except for England, all major industrially developed capitalist countries (U.S., Japan, Germany, Italy after 1887) developed under the shelter of customs barriers. Thus, it would have been not at all strange for the 1965 capitalist policy to have been accompanied by protectionist policies aimed at preventing the country's economic colonization. The reasons for choosing the free trade policy have been summed up by Rudolf Bicanic, one of its ruthless supporters: "In support of the policy of liberalization of economic relations abroad, the following arguments were put forth: Yugoslavia was increasingly falling behind other countries in technological development; the closed economy tended to lower the standards of living in terms of the quantity, quality and variety of available consumer goods and services compared to Western countries; existing industrial capacity could not be fully utilized or rationally developed due to the limited size of the domestic market, the country's natural resources could not be completely exploited with internal capital resources; employment could not be guaranteed for the growing domestic population; efforts to increase labor productivity could only be efficiently realized through international competition."[55]

This type of argument has not stood up to the test of facts: today Yugoslavia is not competitive, it has seen employment decrease, its trade deficit and inflation rise, and the buying power of its severely devaluated dinar crumble. Nor did it take much insight to predict these results: from the beginning of the century, poor countries that become integrated within the world market have been exploited to rich countries' advantage resulting in an increase in world inequalities. Thus, a Ricardian faith in the comparative costs and benefits of foreign commerce appears suspect when coming from the mouths of Yugoslav "liberals." A careful reading of Biconic's work reveals that, as usual, the scientific debate hid very high political stakes. The liberals' attacks were all aimed at the old centralized bureaucratic-collective economy which used protectionism as one of its strong points: in order to plan successfully, the bureaucracy had to distance itself from the world market, whose fluctuations and conditioning effects could upset the planners' decisions.[56] The liberals' position was precisely the opposite: for them,

55. See Bicanic, *op. cit.*, pp. 202-203. Instead of discovering imperialism, Yugoslav theoreticians have discovered Ricardo's law of comparative cost advantages, which notoriously favors the strongest industrial countries—something that perhaps the Yugoslavs have come to realize.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 200. At page 202 Bicanic writes: "In 1952 the new economic system opened Yugoslavia to foreign markets. But this opening could not be substantially realized until 1965,

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integration into the world market meant an irreversible internal thrust for the adoption of mercantile parameters. To become integrated within the world market meant to fully accept all its rules and, above all, to make it impossible to ever return to bureaucratic-centralist planning. Thus, the liberalization of foreign commerce, i.e., the end of protectionism, meant the end of bureaucratic collectivism and the irreversibility of capitalist policy. In the head-on clash, before the 1965 reform, between managers and bureaucrats in Yugoslavia, the protectionist-versus-free-trade-dilemma had a precise meaning: the protectionists were defending the old order and the social relations on which it was based, while the free-trade advocates wanted the country to convert to capitalism and saw in free foreign trade a major tool with thich to eliminate the old order. Thus, there was no place for a policy both capitalist and protectionist: those seeking capitalism considered the insertion into the world market both logical and natural.

Social Inequalities and Regional Imbalances

The failure of the 1965 Yugoslav reforms is also revealed by another indicator: the rise in social and territorial imbalances. The problam of social inequalities has finally been recognized as real by the established powers, after an initially histerical refusal to discuss it. The system's defenders still attempt to minimize it. Thus, Drulovic writes: "In 1966, the ratio of incomes of unskilled and skilled workers was 1 to 2.7. Today the difference is slightly greater. During the "administrative" period it was 1 to 2. Thus, the differences in personal incomes deriving from work are not too remarkable. On the other hand, they are certainly not stimulating." [57] Drulovic would have us believe that Yugoslav society is even too egalitarian although, as he points out, there are a series of "extra" incomes (often "extra" stands for "illegal") which entail a certain expansion of the income spectrum. But Yugoslav statistics are not as egalitarian as Drulovic maintains: after the great reform they reveal income differentials of up to 1 to 43 and 1 to 55, and social inequalities coincide and interlock with regional ones. [58]

Yugoslav public opinion's sensitivity to the problem is a result of material and not ideological facts. But why have social inequalities (which certainly existed even during the bureaucratic period) grown with the great reform—a fact which even Drulovic seems to reluctantly admit? I think the answer can be found in a study of social inequality by a writer for the radical journal, *Praxis*, (closed down by the authorities who found it too bothersome). According to this study, in the early 70s in Slovenia, 23% of total personal consumption came from extra income (refund payments, special rewards,

since many forces were opposed to it due to the preference it accorded to a nationalist and socialist autarchic system."

57. See Drulovic, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

58. Thus, the highest incomes are found in Lubiana (in rich Slovenia) and the lowest in the depressed Kossovo. See N. Popov, "Streiks in der Gegenwärtigen jugoslawischen Gesellschaft," in *Praxis*, 3-4 (1970), pp. 403-433.

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etc.) which was enjoyed by an elite constituting only 5% of the population.[59]

This can be explained by the 1965 reform which permits enterprises to autonomously dispose of most of their income[60] and by the fact that a very distinct social elite dominates. How does power react when faced with these growing inequites? The situation is similar to that of Western countries: the tax system sould bring about income redistribution, but tax fraud is widespread.[61] Even here Marx's analysis of capitalist societies remains valid, in that he points out that to antagonistic production must necessarily correspond antagonistic distribution. In other words, if one recognizes egotism in the production phase, it cannot be ignored in the distribution phase. Yugoslavia is not an exception to the rule. The state protects the formation of huge estates by respecting banking secrecy which, in practice promotes tax evasion and privilege. The lack of private property with respect to fixed capital (but we have seen that this situation is also rapidly changing) does not prevent the accumulation of large private fortunes—which is the normal result of a capitalistically functioning system.

Social inequites are tied to regional imbalances which developed and worsened as commercial interests gradually seeped into the Yugoslav economy. Today the imbalances have attained disturbing dimensions, both because of the distance between various regions, as well as because the discrepancies are not diminishing and these regional imbalances coincide with national questions. For example, in exceedingly poor Kossovo, where one person in ten works, 74% of the inhabitants are Albanians. Faced with this problem, the Yugoslav government reacts in the typical fashion of capitalist governments: help is rendered to the tune of 2% of national revenues,[62] but the causes of underdevelopment are never addressed. It is a quantitative and not a qualitative policy which would aggressively attack the roots of underdevelopment. Without eliminating the structure of underdevelopment, all attempts based on aid or investments poured into the same old internal relations are useless. In particular, capitalist investments in underdeveloped areas must be according to criteria of high productivity in order to be profitable: i.e., they must use capital-intensive techniques employing little labor-power and which are typical of large enterprises. This produces fragmented effects in backward structures because large productive structures absorb the scarce resources in the area (the skilled labor-power is attracted by the higher wages of large enterprises, and capital which goes to large firms since banks prefer "solid clients") leaving small local enterprises drained and often bankrupt. Capital-intensive investments do not solve the

59. See S. Vracar, "Le Monopolisme de Parti et la Puissance Politique des Grupes," in *Praxis*, 3-4 (1970), pp. 381-93. As Kolko's fine book on the distribution of wealth in the USA points out, this type of income is one of the means used by American corporate managers to earn extra income and escape the IRS: in 1957 the cash spent by U.S. managers amounted to 5 to 10 billion dollars. See G. Kolko, *Ricchezza e Potere in America* (Torino, 1964), p. 37.

60. See Hanzekovic, *op.cit.*, p. 285.

61. See Drulovic, *op.cit.*, pp. 118-119.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 160.

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problem, but actually inhibit the growth of employment. Thus, they ultimately reduce consumer demand, thereby blocking even the beginning of the possibility for industrial development.

In Yugoslavia a similar process has taken place in Montenegro—a typically underdeveloped area. During the 1971-75 period, employment increased by only 21,650 workers, not in keeping with demographic increases (in the last 30 years the population has increased by 180,000). As Yugoslav commentators observe, the most considerable sources of investment have been a few pilot projects which have absorbed 584 billion of old dinars, while creating only 3,420 jobs (high organic composition of capital). Furthermore, low returns on investments are attracting little capital.[63] In the final analysis, we have low returns and thus insufficient influx of capital. The inadequate capital invested in pilot sectors had a high organic composition (capitalist criteria), which stimulated such poor occupational dynamics that only 17 to 18 people out of 100 in the country were working in 1975. This is a typical case of capitalist underdevelopment which can be overcome only by renouncing the viewpoint of profit-making, and substituting it with a global logic based on the masses' interests, aimed at social and not individualist utility of investment (profit).

Social Tensions and Political Evolution

The complete economic and social failure of self-managed market "socialism," behind whose facade hides a backward and beggarly capitalism, obtains within a series of intensified social and political conflict mirroring the heavy contradictions tearing the Balkan country apart. Consider strikes. Why and against whom are there strikes? "The results of research so far have shown that the sources of strikes can be found in two basic relations within the organization of work: wage distribution (in three fourths of the cases, the immediate causes are low wages, unpaid wages, liquidation of unpaid differences, large differences among various wages, excessively high rates, lack of recognition of real wages, etc.) as well as a failure of self-management to function (inadequate information, conflicts with the firm's leaders, conflicts among various groups, etc.). Other causes are more varied (excess manpower and cutbacks, bad housing, elimination of work and similar activities)".[64]

At first glance it seems that these are strikes whose characteristics and motivations are the same as in Western countries. But a closer analysis leads to somewhat different conclusions. In analyzing strikes between 1958 (the year of the first sign of strikes) and 1969, Popov provides some interesting data that runs counter to his claim concerning the phenomenon's

63. The Montenegro data are quoted from V. Djuranovic, "Lo Sviluppe Socio-Economico del Montenegro," in *Questioni Attuali del Socialismo*, 2-3 (1976), pp. 62ff. In 1963 Branko Horvat predicted that it was possible that in 18 years (i.e., in 1987), Yugoslavia would attain the U.S.'s present level. See B. Horvat, *Die jugoslawische Gesellschaft, Eine Essay* (Frankfurt, 1972), p. 186ff.

64. See Popov, *op. cit.*

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"continuity" (according to Popov, the nature of the strikes remains the same throughout the period). The strike against the Zasavlje mines (January 1958) occurred at the height of the bureaucratic-collectivist period. Wage demands, which certainly were involved, were subordinated to another demand: workers asked for a price increase in coal since the price established by the plan was so low as to precipitate the mines into a crisis. Thus, the strike's objective was to modify a decision in the state's planning policy with the state-owner as the opposition. The Rojeka strike, which concludes the period considered by Popov, took place in June 1969, in the midst of market self-management. This time the opposition was the firm's management which had launched a company plan predicting an 8.6% reduction of needed longshoremen (a decision which presumably foreshadowed a contraction of labor-power) and an average reduction of 21.6% in wages. It was a typical plan of capitalist restructuring aimed at passing the costs of the crisis on to the workers, as it is usually the case in the West. The content of the strike was thus a protest against a capitalist decision (to shrink work costs to balance the accounts, and thus to uphold profits), in which the opposition was the firm which determines autonomously its economic choices (i.e., the self-managing organs by now alienated from the workers who view them as owners, and who strike against their decisions).

Thus, the 1969 strike was fundamentally different from the preceding one because the earlier one unfolded in the context of a state-owned planned bureaucratic-collectivist economy, while the second one took place in the context of a capitalist economy, thereby altering the strike's goal and opposition. Of course, after 1965 there have also been strikes against the state and its policies. But these occur even in capitalist countries, although they are aimed against a state which does not directly plan the economy, but overlooks a market system within which it guarantees internal and external relations (internal competition and international trade). Similar strikes have occurred in Yugoslavia after 1965, but they can only superficially be compared to the previously mentioned 1958 strike, because the nature of the economy and the position of the state have changed.[65]

Thus, there is no continuity in the Yugoslav experience at the social-economic and political levels and the *Praxis* group (with some exception) is wrong in considering Yugoslav politics as fundamentally unaltered. They overemphasize authoritarianism and conclude that Yugoslavia has always been governed by a Stalinist regime—even if heretical

65. Within this context, the 1971 strikes against two firms, Lifam and Slavonski Partizan, should be mentioned. These strikes were against the federal government's decision to continue importing gas from Czechoslovakia, a decision which heavily damaged the two firms (see Drulovic, *op. cit.*, pp. 257-58). The state here functions not as the central planner and owner, but as guarantor and regulator of foreign trade, which is asked to follow a mild protectionist policy. (This occurs often in the West where often the state has to partly yield to protectionism, even when it follows free trade policies.) The two firms eventually won, demonstrating just how important regional and local pressures can be in Yugoslavia: in this case, the population, the local League of Communists and labor unions combined forces with the firms against the federal government's decisions.

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and nationalist.[66] Actually, Stalinism is not the only example of unipartisan authoritarianism or enslavement of labor unions to state politics: these characteristics can also be found in Nazism and Fascism. Thus, it is a matter of understanding which class interests (and which economic structure) authoritarianism serves. In the U.S.S.R., Stalinism was, and still is, given the very limited character of destalinization, the expression of class domination by the central political bureaucracy. In Yugoslavia, this class saw its power enter into crisis on the heels of the 60s economic crisis, and was politically neutralized by the great 1965 reforms which sanctioned a "new" class' social domination: that of capitalist managers. Political power and authoritarianism are now useful to this new reality. Thus, they have changed to suit the new state of affairs, e.g., the many constitutional changes resulting in the new 1975 Constitution which sanctions the establishment of the new political power structure. Similarly, the party has also evolved. A recent analysis of the composition of the League of Communists brought two things to light: a) the League has undergone a thorough process of de-proletarianization; and b) it has already become the instrument of the top third of society.[67] Even an authoritative communist representative like Jure Bilic has pointed out at the end of 1975 that the League has become a stepping-stone in the social hierarchy, which accounts for why 4th and 5th year university students enroll in the League in mass.[68] In other words, membership in the League is a means to pursue a career in the technocracy and in the bureaucracy.

The preparatory document for the League's X Congress (1973), contains the following self-critical observation: "...the technical-bureaucratic stratum was allied with certain organs of the League of Communists, and to other organs of power (particularly in the towns and in the Republics). There was a tendency of relegating the League of Communists to a subordinated role, and of degrading it from a vanguard of the working-class to an instrument of the technocratic and bureaucratic strata."[69] Despite the

66. See S. Stojanovic, "Socialismo al Bivio," in *Quaderni Ceses*, 1-2 (1976), pp. 3ff. and p. 43, where it is observed that: "The group that dominates party politics and Yugoslav political life was formed under the influence of the Stalinist conception of the party, and remains faithful to it. This is the reason, if not in theory, then in practice, for the party's continuing obsession with monolithic and centralized uniformity." Stojanovic is right, however, when at the beginning of this essay he shows the Stalinist character of Tito's group even at the time of the break with Stalin. The problem, however, is that, with time and with the dynamics of social evolution, this original Stalinism has evaporated. Yet not all of the *Praxis* members fall into this error. Thus, Stevan Vracar, *op. cit.*, points out that all the various social groups seek control of the party, and that social transformations are inevitably reflected in the political structure.

67. See V. Pavlovic, "Partito e Sindacato nella Società Autogestita," in *Quaderni Ceses*, 3 (1973), pp. 669ff. (This is a translation of an article appearing in the ninth issue of the journal, *Nase teme*.) On page 675, Pavlovic points out that the party is dominated by society's top third and that workers constitute 54.6% of those expelled from the League. In 1970 only 29.9% of the League's members were workers (p. 674). For Paulovic, the cause of this is "the lack of development of self-management at the base" (p. 678).

68. See J. Bilic, "I Compiti Attuali," in *Questioni Attuali del Socialismo*, 2-3 (1976), p. 384 and p. 56. This is the text of a conference held in Nov. 1975 by Bilic who at the time was secretary of the Presidential Executive Committee of the League of Communists.

69. See Tito, *Autogestione e Socialismo* (Roma, 1974), p. 239. This is the preparatory

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addition of certain controls after the X Congress, the situation described by Bilic had not substantially improved two years later. Who are these privileged strata for whom the League is becoming (or has already become) and instrument? Among society's top third, which has invaded the League, we find managers, but also political bureaucrats external to the world of production who, presumably in many cases, began their careers under the bureaucratic-collectivist regime. In order to locate the dominant group within the League which determines its general policies, it is necessary to undertake a political and not just a statistical analysis, i.e., it is necessary to ask who were served by the sweeping legislative and economic choices made from 1965 on, and carried out by means of the League.

What is most startling here is the incredible continuity of Yugoslav policies from 1965 to today. These policies have never challenged the 1965 choice to go capitalist. Rather, through a series of changes, they have helped its consolidation. The broadening of what could be private property in 1971, the complete and formal recognition of the mercantile character of prices in 1972 (with their dependence on world prices), the change in control in self-management and over foreign investments in order to favor foreign operators, and the 15th amendment broadening the technocrats' powers, are all aimed at consolidating the developments began by the 1965 reform. The only apparent exception was the 1971-72 purges of some party representatives who had tended toward individualistic and technocratic excesses and the above-mentioned document from the League's X Congress. At any rate, the purges in question hit only some representatives who wanted to push the reforms too far, by giving a free hand to centrifugal forces which could have undermined the very unity of the Yugoslav state. In other words, a contradictory and multinational country like Yugoslavia needs a minimum of central power to mediate the social and political contradictions that continuously emerge: a function performed by every capitalist state. The capitalist policy is thus never in question. It was merely a matter of safeguarding the unity of the Yugoslav state. This is further confirmed by the X Congress document itself. Aside from its fairly harsh tone, this document is extremely weak because it does not locate the causes of the technocratic degeneration, nor does it propose ways to eliminate such causes. [70] Thus, the document reduces to propagandistic and bureaucratic lip-service, devoid of real content concerning the guiding role of the League.

The causes of this degeneration are to be found in the 1965 self-management policy, which was a response to the managers' pressures and which the present governing circles in the League fully ratified. Faced with

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document to the X Congress of the League and it is not only Tito's product but of the League's entire leading group.

70. The same contradiction can be found in the book by the Titoist socialist theorist, E. Kardely, *Proprietà Sociale e Autogestione* (Milano, 1975), p. 75. Kardely denounces technocracy but reaffirms his faith in that market socialism which gives rise to technocracy. For a more extensive criticism of Kardely, see V. Aeinade, "Economie et Autogestion en Yugoslavie," in *Autogestion*, 37-38, pp. 171ff.

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the centrifugal forces generated by this policy, today the governing group is attempting to make amends and reaffirm its guiding role in society. The alliance with the technocrats which led to the great 1965 reversal, when part of the League's leadership abandoned the sinking bureaucratic-collectivist system and aligned itself with the emerging managerial group, has begun to look dangerous. The social crisis and disintegration of the country have attained such dimensions, the reforms' failure is so obvious, that the League's leadership is trying to reaffirm its own role (and to distance itself from the managers) in order to handle the explosive situation. But since it is compromised to the core with its 1965 policy and it is unthinkable to restore the old bureaucratic-collectivist order which in its time died from total exhaustion, the leadership's only alternative is to stand behind the 1965 decision by trying to hit those who carry out the policy to its extreme to the point of challanging Yugoslav state unity. Capitalism itself is not questioned, but only some of its excessively anarchical consequences. Of course intervention in order to block economic development's excessive anarchical consequences is one of the normal functions of the capitalist state (and the political forces that manage it). However, this "rationalization" does not always work, and on more than one occasion the state has had to retreat in the fact of social forces too organic and deeply embedded within the system to be contained. In Yugoslavia's case, the party continues to be a specific groups' instrument of upward mobility, well over two years after the X Congress, and the new 1975 constitution has confirmed the 1965 policy, underlining even more the decentralized and individualistic elements countering the central power's unity. Planning is only required in the weak sense that one must take part in it. The plan's policies are not binding and the state's obligatory interventions in the economy are the exception, since everything must be decided by economic agents. As for the state's role in the general equilibrium of the economic system, it is similar in all respects to that of capitalist states. "One of the Federation's main functions is the assurance of market unity. What does this mean in practice? The Federation provides for the unhampered circulation of goods and services from the technical and professional realm throughout the entire territory of the Federation of Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia. Market unity implies freedom of association for labor and resources—the freedom to practice business throughout the land and the free competition on the market, social agreements and consent to increase production and integration, as well as providing for any necessary measures to prevent monopolistic domination of the market.... In a decentralized economy, which always tends to strengthen autonomy, initiative and economic motivations of work units are indispensable for preventing an uncontrolled anarchist development and eliminating egotistical and particularistic interests." [71]

What is relevant here is that the economic thrust of the great reform had to

71. See Drulovic, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-70.

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be made "constitutional"[72] thus sanctioning the continuity of this decade's policies (1965-75). A major change, on the other hand, was the rule that every decision on vital questions had to be made with the unanimous consent (not a majority) of the six republics and the two provinces. Thus, the central power received a severe blow with the recognition of particularistic tendencies which it had sought to eliminate in previous years. Capitalist development produces particularistic tendencies, imbalances and egotism. In a poor country like Yugoslavia, these contradictions are especially serious since they are interwoven with national issues. The problem can only be resolved with a balanced development which is impossible within a capitalist system. The purge of some overly nationalistic leader is certainly not a long-term solution. After the 1971-72 purges, the League's leading group had to give way: the system born out of the 1965 reforms generated growing particularistic tendencies which had to be acknowledged. After the reaffirmation of the role of the League and of the central power, the constitution was so decentralized as to appear anti-functional. Reality is not exorcised with mere words: the profound weakness of the X Congress's attempted turn has been confirmed by facts. The fundamental policies adopted in 1965 continue to characterize Yugoslav society even today, and the process of Yugoslav self-managed socialism (capitalism) with its contradictions, has affected the political and institutional structures of the country, bending them to its demands.

Conclusions: Answer to Sik

The preceding analysis leads to a bitter conclusion: the failure of the Yugoslav experience is not a result of a bad or partial application of the 1965 reform, but from their intrinsic nature. The technocratic degeneration of Yugoslav enterprises where managers act as owners is the consequence of a mercantile policy that prevents the working class from becoming hegemonic within the productive structures. The same can be said for unemployment the growth of imbalances and inflation. The free trade option and the receptiveness to Western investment, which completed the mercantile policy, have sharpened the previously mentioned contradictions.

This critique of market socialism has recently roused the anger of Ota Sik, one of the most authoritative theoreticians of market socialism, whose reforms in Czechoslovakia were largely inspired by Yugoslav models. On the one hand Sik accepts my criticisms of the Soviet Union and on the bureaucratic-collectivist system, while on the other he rejects my criticisms of the market socialist model as idealistic[73]—criticisms fully confirmed by the

72. The preceding constitution (1963) was the result of a compromise with centralist and bureaucratic tendencies which had not yet been eliminated. See Drulovic, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-63. The 1965 economic reform clearly shifted power relations which were completed with the elimination of the Rankovic group. A series of amendments followed which modified the constitution up to the new 1975 constitution. For the debate and the projects preceding the new constitution, see V. Mratovic, "Le Innovazioni Instituzionali nelle Nuove Constituzioni," in *Quaderni Ceses,* 4-5 (1974), pp. 140ff.

73. See Ota Sik, *Quale Comunismo?* (Bari, 1977), pp. 114ff. and p. 230. For Russia, it is

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Yugoslav failure (the most complete and illustrious case of market "socialism"). Yet, I must reject Siks embarrassing support: he accepts my criticism of the Soviet system not because he believes in an authentically socialist workers' alternative, but because it can be used to support his technocratic and managerial theses.[74] Sik's instrumentalism becomes evident when he distorts my discussion and ignores the content of my objections. He avoids the issue by claiming that I do not know the Czechoslovak position—allegedly very different from those of Brus, whose position I chose to criticize because they seemed to represent the highest theoretical level reached in Eastern Europe by economic reformists. Unfortunately, Sik forgets to indicate how his opinions differ from Brus': in reality both he and Brus propose an economic model in which management is decentralized at the level of individual enterprises on the basis of mercantile criteria (profit).

At any rate Sik writes that my "way of pulling things together simplifies the problem of optimal development of production in an industrially advanced country to such a point, that it can only be the result of a purely idealistic utopia. First of all, within a general framework it is assumed that even without a market the enterprises run by workers councils can *recognize* before hand what type of products they should produce to satisfy the needs of the consumers of the whole country. But, how is this possible when there exist millions of products and where there is continual change in demand structures? How, for example, could an enterprise react to an increase in demand when an increase in its production depends in turn on the availability (which increases differentially) of products from hundreds of other suppliers, subsuppliers, subsubsuppliers, i.e., on the proportional increase in production of raw materials, partially finished products, machines, energy, etc. All of these things remain unsaid.... The idea that it would be sufficient to plan only the *global* development of production at the central level (i.e., only to investigate the *global* need according to the sectors' structure), and to leave the determination of the concrete microstructure of production to the enterprises ignores in the first place the determining connection among investments (for individual sectors) fixed by the center, and the concrete productive capabilities of enterprises." Furthermore: "The recognition that *specific conflicts of interest*, which under socialist conditions of production must necessarily arise due to the long-term immutability in the *conditions of work and consumption* and which cannot be resolved by means of any planned and centrally controlled activity (and even less with moral appeals), can be resolved through market socialist relations, *regulated* within a *directing macroeconomic plan*, has been one of the most substantial areas of

pointed out that "Carlo's criticism can be accepted as correct" but for what regards my thesis concerning the class nature of the bureaucracy, he claims that, "It is an argument that merits consideration and can be confirmed on many points."

74. Sik came slowly to the idea of workers self-management. Originally his reformism was decisively technocratic. See K. Kovanda, "Czechoslovak Workers' Councils," in *Telos*, 28 (Summer, 1976), pp. 38ff, and pp. 45ff. On the other hand, the self-management model realized during Prague's Spring was certainly not too encouraging.

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progress in Czechoslovak theoretical evolution." And, finally, "Carlo supposes an interest on the part of all enterprises' collectives in continually and flexibly modifying the productive microstructure, in bettering the quality of products and in providing new and more useful ones.... And all this should occur without corresponding variations in workers' remuneration, but only, so to speak, on the basis of their socialist ethics. But this is an expression of a clear underevaluation of the material motivations for extraordinary work in socialism.... If the collectives, in exploiting all possibilities for optimal productive development with added work, realize that they are not obtaining higher rewards relative to those collectives exerting little effort...soon they too would slacken their pace."[75]

First of all, I do not deny the necessity for the masses' standard of living to grow in socialism: I criticized Russian bureaucratic collectivism because it favored steel over consumer goods, and I sympathetically spoke of the Maoist model precisely because it dealt with the masses' demands very differently.[76] I have not ignored the fact that people must be better off in order to participate in building socialism: to be socialist, a system must serve the masses, i.e., it must better people's lives, beginning with material goods. There is nothing more alien to my thought than the moralistic idealism Sik attributes to me. The same can be said with respect to workers' consciousness or the conflicts of interest within the working class. Nowhere do I claim that the working class is infallible and that no conflicts can emerge within it.[77] If anything, it is Sik who grossly and naively underestimates the problem. His proposed solution of using mercantile criteria to guide the economy does not resolve but intensifies the problem. If enterprises dispose of their income (or of the majority of it) autonomously so that wages and investment policies are largely decided by the firms, the result will be that the richest firms will have broader possibilities for

75. See Sik, *Quale Comunismo?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 115-17. Italics in the original. On page 114, Sik finds the causes that in my opinion led to the birth of bureaucratic collectivism too simple: the "simple" cause was the Russian working class' exhaustion from 1917 to 1920, which prevented the construction of a real workers' democracy, which is a fact of considerable importance. (How can socialism be built without the working class?) The only remark that Sik makes against this "simplified" explanation is that bureaucratic collectivism occurred even in countries like Czechoslovakia where the working class has not been destroyed (p. 280n). Yet, Sik forgets that I maintained that the bureaucratic-collectivist system's beginning came about in Russia's satellites not out of endogenous causes as in Russia, but for exogenous causes (the Russian military occupation). See my "The Socio-Economic Nature of the USSR," *op. cit.* There is nothing strange in this since it is not too difficult to impose a mode of production through foreign military intervention.

76. More recently, I have emphasized that the buying power of Chinese workers, according to Western estimates, has grown tenfold in real terms during the period between 1949 and 1970. See my "Autenticità e Contradizioni del Socialismo in Cina," in *Terzo Mondo*, 30, pp. 5-6.

77. In the course of my work on the U.S.S.R., I did not specifically attack this problem because my concern was not the transition to socialism, but the non-socialist character of the Soviet system and, to a certain extent, of Ota Sik's or Tito's brand of market "socialism." Elsewhere, however, I have maintained that, if Lenin's thesis concerning the external consciousness of the proletariat is wrong, this does not mean to accept pro-worker positions that idealize the proletariat: class consciousness is neither the result of a mechanical process tied to the workers' condition nor is it unavoidable. See my "Lenin on the Party," in *Telos*, 17 (Fall 1973), pp. 2-40.

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financing and wage policies than the poorer firms. In other words, they will be able to invest more and pay higher wages, thus attracting the best labor-power. In a mercantile system where everyone invests for his own profit in competition with others, there are no incentives to change this state of affairs: the richest firms will think only about their own businesses (i.e., profits), thereby creating sectorial and regional breaks. The Yugoslav experience warns of just that: the distance between rich and poor regions has become institutionalized, and this has fostered conflicts that undermine the Yugoslav state's very unity. The market socialist model instrumentalizes conflicts, not to overcome them, but to intensify them and institutionalize them in a way similar to capitalism. With regard to this, Sik maintains that his mercantile criteria are not capitalist but socialist.[78] Fine, but he does not clarify the practical and dynamic differences between these two forms of market economy. Such an explanation is even more necessary on the heels of the disaster of the Yugoslav economy.

On the other hand, I believe that the problem can be solved within the framework of a central and binding plan that uses some mercantile criteria as dependent and subordinate elements, modifying them in their dynamics and subordinating them to the plan. It is a matter of realizing that, if there are common interests, it is easier to realize them by cooperating than by massacring one another competitively. The material incentive can be used more to integrate the enterprise within the global framework than to stimulate egoistic competition which is socialist only in name. How? Instead of scaling incentives to the individual firms' production, it would be necessary, within a global plan, to provide a base of national incentives tied to the realization of the yearly plan and at least as important as the enterprise's local incentives. This would discourage the firms' particularistic tendencies if an individual firm realizes its own plan through means damaging to the total economy or other firms there is the risk that the global plan will not be realized and therefore that the national incentive will not be attained.

In this way, one would start from the workers' material interest expressed through an exchange (a performance of labor with a high level of engagement for a monetary reward). But instead of enterprises opposing each other competitively, one would stimulate in them an attitude of collaboration and of integration within the plan. A mercantile criterion can be effective within the framework of a planned economy tied to the realization of

78. See Ota Sik, *op. cit.*, p. 281n. Here Sik maintains that mercantile criteria are supposedly subordinated to the plan's macro-economic goals. In reality, this subordination does not exist because Sik clearly asserted that enterprises must act on the basis of the law of value and of mercantile criteria which are not legally bonds (i.e., the plan must not be legally binding). See Ota Sik, *Piano e Mercato nel Socialismo* (Roma, 1969), p. 249. In a situation of this type, with an advisory mercantile plan based on an economy dominated by the market, the plan ends up being a reflection of market dynamics—the extrapolation of market tendencies, as in Yugoslavia. Ota Sik discovers advisory "planning" precisely when it is in jeopardy in countries like Sweden which has attempted to practice it for a long time (with very feeble results). See A. Lindbek, *La Politica Economica Svedese* (Napoli, 1976), pp. 217-35.

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macroeconomic and macrosocial ends which are the negation of the typical particularism of mercantile economies. This entails no idealism, but a search for new material relations on which to base a new socialist consciousness.

As for the objectives to be attained, they seem to me fairly clear. It is a mystery to no one that today a set of objectives exists for development in the Third World: agricultural growth, increase in the standard of living, growth of employment. These objectives, however, which are not only expressed at meetings of experts in the matter, but also in the masses' bloodily suppressed periodic revolts, are not realized simply because capitalism, as a world system, prevents their realization. The same is true for advanced countries: even there, agricultural development (which is backward practically everywhere even if not as in the Third World), the problem of housing (unsolved even in advanced countries), or that of regional imbalances (increasingly present also in neo-capitalist countries) are easily identifyable objectives. The real problem, therefore, is not that of identifying the objectives, but of articulating binding macroeconomic policies with the enterprises' microeconomic autonomy, since not everything can be centrally planned. On this point, Sik's position is drastic: a binding macroeconomic plan is not possible. It is necessary for enterprises to be free to choose on the basis of market forces, although availing themselves of the information contained in the state plan (i.e., a plan which is merely suggestive). Apparently the market does not contain disfunctions; yet, the Yugoslav case is proof to the contrary. Sik's alternative can not be passed off as either perfect or convincing. In fact, it also encountered perplexity and resistance in the Czech New Course (where it was eventually accepted) in persons such as Kosta, totally uncompromised with Stalinism (which cannot be said of many right-wing reformers). As Kosta pointed out, everything cannot be decentralized because the market abandoned to itself, cannot realize social objectives (e.g., support to underdeveloped areas) which are essential to the socio-economic stability of a country.[79]

But is it true that binding macroeconomic policies and microeconomic autonomy cannot be reconciled? The Chinese case shows exactly the opposite since it is founded on strong central guidance and on a remarkable autonomy at the peripheral level.[80] On this point Sik is silent and avoids the

79. See Kosta, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48 and pp. 58-60.

80. See C. Bettelheim, *Il Socialismo in Cina* (Roma, 1966); his *L'Organizazione Industriale in Cina e la Rivoluzione* (Milan, 1974); and F. Shermann, *Ideologia, Organizazione e Società in Cina* (Milano, 1972). Although I am inclined to suspend judgment on the socialist character of the Chinese experience, even during the Maoist phase, this experience contains indications of the great historical importance in relation to planning and the articulation of central macro-economic objectives along with considerable peripheral autonomy. In addition, the Chinese model was far less simple than the Stalinist one because it did not aim solely at the development of heavy industry, but at a balanced development among the three basic sectors (agriculture, heavy and light industry). This made it much more complex in a country immensely rich in diversity (another reason why the Stalinist model was rapidly put aside). This experience has given rise to a series of studies by the Bettelheim school, which have provided some hypothetical solutions to the problem Sik discusses. They are, of course, questionable, but still

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confrontation by limiting himself to accepting the insolubility of the problems thus necessitating recourse to the market model. Even there the tone of his argument is false and capricious because if it is true that advanced industrial economies are complex, the complexity inherited from capitalism would have to be reduced in a manner consistent with a planned economy's framework. This is because a great deal of capitalism's millions of products are notoriously artificial duplicates born out of the demands of competition, and different only in secondary characteristics. It is a case of one of the many absurd wastes in the system.

This does not mean that the problem does not exist; yet, Sik's solution need not be accepted since ultimately it is not a solution at all. To construct a system that functions like capitalism while calling it socialism is not the best way to go about building socialism. If one believes that socialism is unrealizable, one should say so straight-forwardly. But one should not try to protect oneself by calling socialism what is in fact capitalism. This is cheap deception.

A real solution to the problem in question obviously cannot come but from an actual mass experimentation that takes into account previous experiences (and failures). This is not a facile statement: this mass experimentation can be reached (CIA, U.S.A., and capital permitting) with the aid of theoretical propositions and historical experiences which should be verified and studied in depth. These propositions do exist and can be further elaborated, but one thing is certain: only a mass experiment will be able to clarify to what an extent they are valid. Those who believe that a model for socialism can be elaborated in an armchair and then administered to the people would be naive: no social system is born within the walls of universities but in the dynamics of social contradictions and of the class struggle that they generate. This is how it has been for capitalism—some of whose dynamic aspects even today we do not clearly understand—and so will be for socialism.

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elaborated on the bases of real experiences. See also C. Bettelheim, *Problémes Théoretiques et Pratiques de la Pianification* (Paris, 1966); *Calcul Economique et formes de Proprieté* (Paris, 1970). The first book was published originally in 1946, but successive editions were revised in light of new problems. See also, by the same author, *Le Transition ver l'Economie Socialiste* (Paris, 1968).

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SEXUAL ECONOMY TODAY*

by Helmut Dahmer

"mit dir will ich mich vereinigen
wenns sein muss 'Kriminell'."
Peter Paul Zahl

The Revolution of Sexual Morality

After World War II, a change of the "sexual economy"[1] was beginning in the most highly developed industrial societies, the islands of prosperity with "mixed economic systems" (P. Mattick). In the thirties, indeed even in the fifties, bourgeois-capitalist society was still considered by both opponents and defenders to be one in which the sexual needs of its acculturated members are limited, prohibited and penalized as much as possible, with sexuality banned from publicity (except as a scandal or a crime). The "sex-wave" however, brought a return of the repressed. Since then "sex" is not only recognized but propagated as a "central life interest." The change indicates an alteration in the mode of protecting domination. Within bourgeois society the individuals are indirectly associated through exchange relations which mask and legitimate exploitation. This system was completed by a combination of force and resignatory morals. In wasteful capitalism, however, the morals of resignation in the area of consumption have been replaced by their opposite, a sort of hedonistic propaganda. Loyalty is, accordingly, no longer sought mainly by excessive moral demands, which generate guilt-feelings, but by granting sexual and other freedoms; it is no longer a product of repression, but of permission. Masses are no longer constituted mainly in public—in halls and arenas, on the streets and squares, or in organizations—but in private,[2] by couples, or in the small family, and not by means of goal-inhibited libido, but by means of direct sexual satisfaction in couples.

The official sexual morality has changed. Setting the pace for the new sexual mores are sex-education institutions and media in the broadest sense:

*Translated by David Parent.

1. "One of the most important fields of research of the sexual economy is the kind of system of sexual life, and here two areas must be distinguished: the sexual budget. . . of the individual, and the sexual system of society, which determines it ('personal' and 'social' sexual economy)." Wilhelm Reich, "Ueberblick über das Forschungsgebiet der Sexualökonomie," in *Zeitschrift für Politische Psychologie und Sexualökonomie*, II, 1935, p. 8.

2. "Massification takes place 'solipsistically'. . . the places in which massification is being produced today are not 'sport stadiums' or Madison Square Gardens, but private apartments and homes. . . the 'scattered mass' still remain paralyzed because although numbering in the millions it remains deprived of the ability to escape from its lack of initiatives and impact as long as it is compartmentalized in separate and different hermitages, while a real crowd assembled in one place, though it may number only a thousand demonstrators, always has the chance of gaining an impact of its own, of escaping control and acting *as* a mass." Guenther Anders, "Der sanfte Terror. Theorie des Konformismus" (II), in *Merkur. Deutsche Zeitschrift für europaeisches Denken*, Nr. 194 (XVIII, 4) April 1964, p. 349f.

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sexualized advertizing; "pornography" disseminated by films, art of the serious and of the entertainment branches; the chain of stores whose offerings include sexual information, stimulants and dummies; massage parlors and hostess services, which find their customers in cities and suburbs as well as in rural areas. Their agencies are pre-school and school-institutions, where—using the newest child-psychology and psycho-therapeutic "hits" as framework and guidelines—new standards in attitudes and behavior are being set. "Sex education" in the narrower sense is the filtering evaluative and reflective authority for the innovations in sexual mores; it transforms them into aids-for-living for adolescents (and educators). Family-socialization and penal-code reforms follow only after a long interval. Sex-education in the wider sense does not (and doesn't need to know) what it is doing; sex-education in the narrower sense knows far too seldom what it is doing, although its legitimacy depends on the claim that it can give reasons for its judgments and recommendations. Even the text-books of sex-educators accepted as "progressives" are expressions of the change in sexual mores rather than contributions to its understanding. Their pedagogical interests outweigh by far their theoretical-political interests concerning structure and evolution of society. To the extent that they are bound to seek practical solutions for the everyday problems of their clientele, they must relativize and put in parentheses the theoretical context of their own activities.

Review of Psychoanalytical Sexual Theory

Sexual experience deals with pleasure gained from zones of the body; the sphere of sexuality includes corporeal sensations, wishes and practices, experiences of tension and release, desire for satisfaction, want, removal, refusal, postponement, inhibition, and anxiety, experiences of one's own body and in interaction with others, with symbols and surrogates, phantasies and projections. The human feelings of pleasure and displeasure are generally uncoupled from inherited automatic forms of behavior; they cannot protect, but threaten the survival of the unfinished human individuals, who have been expelled prematurely from the maternal womb. The "structuring" of the luxuriating drives results from bodily mimic-gestic interaction which is ultimately mediated by symbols. The socializing agents represent in this process of drive-structurization the respective "culture" in group-specific modification. The object of human drives is not a biologically determined, innate one. Socialization first shows the drives their way, first interprets, tolerates, condemns, and fixates objects and modes of satisfaction. The continuously flowing, intra-somatic sources of irritation need definition by experiences of refusal and satisfaction, need the formation of psychic representations, to become drives for us. The process of structuring the drive energies in social intercourse (at first between mother and child) first gives them their culture-specific meaning. "Life" and "death" drives are therefore "mythological beings," the most general interpretations of our experiences of happiness and suffering.

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The luxuriating human drives comprise a potential of wish-energies which does not fit completely into any institutional arrangement. Men cannot simply let themselves go, neither to their own nature nor to external nature, they need an arsenal of mediations—of symbols and instruments, of standardized roles which facilitate social behavior under intersubjectively acknowledged norms. A further generic risk results from the striking asynchrony of ontogenetic development. The early sexual blooming of the oedipal phase is followed by the maturation of the progeneration power only after an interval of seven to ten years. Libido as sexual pleasure becomes a problem as a consequence of the ontogenetic lag of ego-maturation and because of its asocial character (as the antipode of individual and collective self-preservation). Human nature is disharmoniously constituted; no natural environment corresponds hospitably to its excessive needs; it does not fit harmoniously into any society, not even a "classless" one. Its nature drives men onto the path of history. None of the changing modes of production, none of the corresponding principles of reality corresponds to the "pleasure principle." Sexuality remains the Achilles' heel of the race and of the individual. Biographically suffered traumas leave scars in the libidinous structure of the individuals, which are manifested as character deformations, neurotic or psychotic disturbances.

The drives work—with their own specific means—to diminish unbearable stimulus-quanta. Their goal is the (re)storation of relatively stimulus-free, less unpleasurable states, the symbolic-real return to the mother's womb, to the sea, to an inanimate-inorganic state. Sexual stimulation (like sleep, hypnosis, etc.) thus is located on the "thalassal regression movement,"[3] and it escapes from the world, undifferentiation. Origin is the goal. Only if everyday life were free of the burden of socially conditioned misery, could the "death instinct" lose its force, and people would be free from the attraction of a past in which peace and happiness (which can be desired goals only in life and for life) coincide with the eternal rest of inorganic existence (H. Marcuse).

The revolution of thought accomplished by Freud in the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*[4] (1905)—the disquieting acknowledgement of the polymorphic perversity of human sexuality—was a consequence of his theory of neuroses. Neuroses are peculiar forms of assimilating components of sexuality that cannot find a "normal" outlet, they are defense-superstructures of latent "perversions." Genitality is the (sole) heir to the polycentrism of different erogenous zones which preceded it ontogenetically. It grows parasitically on the soil of those pleasurable experiences and impulses which, after the successful establishment of genital primacy and its normative sanctioning are perceived only as deviations or "perversions." The de-fetishization of genitality, i.e., of residual sexuality instrumentalized for

3. Cf. Sàndor Ferenczi, "Versuch einer Genitaltheorie." (1924) *Thalassa; Theory of Genitality* (New York, Albany: The Psychoanalytic Quart. Inc., 1938).

4. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* [*St. Ed.*] (London: The Hogarth Press, 1953-4); vol. 7, p. 123-243.

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purposes of procreation, was the decisive accomplishment of psychoanalytical theory. Genital primacy was relativized to a partial drive *sui generis* or to a mere sum of partial drives.[5] It was no longer considered as being simply a biological phenomenon and was recognized as something ontogenetically late and therefore always an endangered result of early-childhood psycho-sexual development.

The analysis of genital-centered sexual satisfaction teaches that the pleasure of sexual play stems from the restoration of old bodily freedoms: the resexualization of the body which had been de-sexualized in the process of socialization. Foreplay reactivates the surrendered, buried erogenous zones. Their excitations intercommunicate and, playfully recapitulating the de-sexualization, they flow to the "genital executive," until—in the sexual climax—the excitement flows off centrifugally from the genitals and for some moments transforms the entire body back into *one* functioning erogenous zone. Without such periodically repeated, playful abolition of the instrumentalization of the body for unpleasurable work for the purpose of self-preservation, without such "regression in the service of the ego" (sleep and dream, tenderness, kiss and copulation, restitution of the old symbiosis), man's life would be unbearable.

The process of cultural evolution was one of progressive distancing from animality. The earliest social differentiation (one that has lasted until today) resulted from certain restrictions of promiscuity. Social definitions of consanguinity barred "incestuous" sexual relations (between different generations and among siblings or close relatives of one "marriage class"); the commandment of exogamy mandated love of strangers and opened the way to the formation of larger communities. The later distinction between legitimate and illegitimate procreation led to a licensing of genital satisfaction only within the framework of monogamous marriage. Finally, all forms of sexual practice which did not favor conception were prohibited. The malleability of the luxuriating libidinous drives, their cultivability, made it possible to restrict direct drive satisfactions, to bind them to ever longer chains of preconditions[6] (prior achievements). In the modern era, body-hostile "innerworldly asceticism" celebrated its triumphs especially in the Reformation countries, the centers of capitalist development. The historical modifications of human nature realized in work, socialization and class warfare in different societies bear the stamp of the respective conditions of domination. The social constitution of sexuality—how it is interpreted, which partial drives are rewarded, which ones are suppressed, which forms of sexual intercourse prevail—is conditioned by the respective mode of production and

5. "In genitality, the partial libido (survives) and is summed up in it. Every happiness is ignited by the tension of the two." Theodor W. Adorno, "Sexualtabus und Recht heute" (1963) in Adorno, *Eingriffe: Neun kritische Modelle* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1963), p. 104.

6. Cf. Norbert Elias, *Ueber den Prozess der Zivilisation*. (1939). 2nd expanded edition (Bern: Francke, 1969). Also Jos von Ussel, *Sexualunterdrückung: Geschichte der Sexualfeindschaft* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1970).

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is therefore a phenomenon of the superstructure. The very pleasure resulting from the diminution of unpleasure, the spared exertion of inhibition, the loosening of the fear-barriers, is released in the festive return to old freedoms. This pleasure, once constituted, is a social category.[7] Therefore the no-longer forbidden pleasure offers no fulfillment to our longing.

The (sexual) relation between the two sexes is, in its culture-specificity, the boundary situation of the relation of the associated individuals to external nature and is very revealing about the level of social evolution. Here the "object" of action is another person; thus, potentially the encounter with nature can result in intersubjectivity or self-encounter. The relation to non-human nature (mediated through work and class warfare) also characterizes the sexual relation with the other person. Therefore, for Fourier and Marx, the relation of the sexes was considered an indicator of how far men's needs had already become "truly human."[8] In class societies *interhuman relations are dominated by economic interests. Only a society* with real superabundance would eliminate the primacy of self-preservation interests and economic considerations even in love relations. Erotic and intellectual attraction, shared experience, practical-technical interests pursued together would then be constitutive of (short- or long-term, not exclusive) pair or couple relations. Engels saw such disencumberment from economic coercions as presaged in the living conditions of the proletariat, a class whose individuals are no longer dominated by the worry of increasing family property under market conditons. Their sexual need, it seemed, no longer had to be put in the service of economic purposes, love no longer had to lead to a lifelong house-slavery and intra-familial prostitution.

The goal of the evolution of socialization, in which the individuals recapitulate cultural evolution, is to subject them to the respectively dominant principle of social life and of social reality. They must identify with and appropriate the (moral) imperatives of collective self-preservation (on which individual self-preservation depends). In this process of transformation, in which the luxuriating drives are given a culture-specific structure, asocial instinctive wishes are connected with the traditional morality of renunciation and promises, and individuals in need of care are equipped with a control-authority (ego, super-ego) involving the de-sexualization of the body, which can be an organ of pleasure as well as a hell of privation and torment. The transformation of the body from a (potential) "instrument" of pleasure into an unpleasure-resistent, desensitized instrument of work takes place at the expense of the multifaceted non-genital pleasures of the body. In the course of specialization resulting from the division of labor, the genitals

7. "Nature knows no real pleasure: it goes no further than to still a need. All pleasure is social in unsublimated feelings no less than in the sublimated ones. It stems from alienation." Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung: Philosophische Fragmente* (1944) (Amsterdam: Querido, 1947), p. 127.

8. Cf. Karl Marx, *Oekonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte aus dem Jahre 1844.* in *Marx-Engels Werke*, Ergaenzungsband, 1. Teil (Berlin: Dietz, 1968), p. 535.

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become an erogenous reservation. With the establishment of genital primacy, the sexual interest is subsumed under the system of collective self-preservation; pleasure becomes a mere reward for the individuals' work of procreation. The bi-sexual disposition of the two sexes, precondition of their interactions, is socially denied by the strict polarization of the sexual roles. Male and female individuals become compulsorily heterosexual under social pressure,[9] their homosexuality atrophies. Overt homosexuality is tabooed; latent, goal-impeded homosexuality is utilized for the massification of the coercively collectivized, socialized, unequally placed class-individuals, insofar as it is useful for the illusory equalization of the members of the 'nation" and of other communities.[10] Prostitution is declared illegal because it divulges the secret of wage-slavery and bourgeois marriage; abortion, because it seeks to abolish the involuntary binding of pleasure to procreation *post festum*. "Deviant" coital position and games (fellatio, cunnilingus, etc.) are proscribed, for they symbolize the instrumentalization of the body for pleasure instead of for work, procreation and pregnancy. Sexual intercourse among juveniles is considered culturally harmful because it robs the institution of marriage of its monopoly on sexual satisfaction and the adult generation of a decisive means of domination.

Freud defined the crisis of modern society as follows:[11] Culture's cumulative process of renunciation has so increased the level of domination of nature that mankind stands on the threshold of the "Golden Age." At this point of development the renunciations extorted from the majority of the population can hardly be justified any longer. Instrumental reason has invalidated the traditional illusions of the type of religion which legitimated "culture," together with its shadow: social inequality. So although today the conquest of shortages is coming within reach, the cultural process reproduces the danger against which it was first set in motion: that the race is subject to the hostile violence of nature, this time of inner nature, whose destructive potential grew with increasing domination of external nature (on the basis of increased drive-renunciation). Implausible demands for renunciation and insufficient compensations generate in the individuals a growing potential for aggression which can be discharged in socially progressive or regressive ways; eros, restricted and deprived of its chances for cathexis and sublimation, disintegrates. "Twilights of the gods" and liberating misdeeds made possible higher cultural development whenever traditional forms of domination were undermined by progress in the domination of nature. At present, the pedagogically stimulated renunciation of collective illusions can lead to the abolition of the existing class structure. Such an escape from unfree

9. Cf. Sàndor Ferenczi, "On the nosology of male homosexuality (homo-eroticism)." (1911-1914) in Ferenczi, *Sex and Psycho-analysis; Contributions to Psychoanalysis.* (New York: Basic Books, 1950), p. 315.

10. Cf. S. Freud, "Group Psychology and Analysis of the Ego." (1921) *Standard Edition*, vol. 18, p. 141.

11. Cf. "The Future of an Illusion." (1927) *Standard Edition*, vol. 21, p. 1-56, and "Civilization and its Discontents," *ibid.*, p. 57-145.

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association could inaugurate an era in which "culture no longer oppresses anyone." The system of collective protection of life based on the exploitation of majorities by minorities needed, in order to integrate individuals who did not receive their due in it, the cement of goal-inhibited libidinous energies. In a society liberated from need and domination, such an "irrational" massification would be unnecessary. A "resurrection of the body,"[12] the rehabilitation of partial drives and the elimination of the crude and exhausting reaction-formations directed against them, the opening up of chances of sublimation for the majority, instead of only for the (culture-furthering) minority of the associated individuals would become possible. "...we can quite well imagine a cultural community consisting of double individuals..., who, libidinally satisfied in themselves, are connected with one another through the bonds of common work and common interests. If this were so, civilization would not have to withdraw any energy from sexuality."[13] It could absorb the individuals' aggressiveness. The life of freely associated 'double individuals' would be attractive enough to counterbalance their regressive death-wishes;[14] they would no longer need religious and para-religious consolations.

Defense by Isolation

The structure and functions of the "classical" sexual economy of the capitalist era have become discernible in its decaying phase: The official dominant sexual morality was that of the owners of the means of production, the capitalist class and its petit-bourgeois appendage. It codified a behavior tailored to work as an end-in-itself, relentless appropriation of the surplus work of others, and self-utilization of value. Sexual practice was clearly subsumed under economics.

Bourgeois society is an individualistic one, the first in which the isolated individual could survive detached from the ties of consanguinity, conditions of personal domination, cut off from the soil and separated from the means of production and food. Millions of private owners (with their families) who control the means of production decisive for social production, or who are only private owners of themselves (free wage earners), drive onward the epochal process of disappropriation which began with the "original accumulation of capital" and has meanwhile led to the formation of huge multinational corporations. The isolated individuals stand primarily in merely objective interdependence: Whoever has disposal only over himself, works for others, using their tools and food to sustain his life; whoever, in addition to his own labor, owns a private property suitable for appropriating the works of others, uses their labor.

12. Cf. Norman O. Brown, *Life against Death* (Middletown: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1959), chap. 16.

13. Cf. S. Freud, "Civilization and its Discontents," *St. Edit.*, vol. 21, p. 108f.

14. Cf. Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), Ch. X.

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The (appropriation) exchange of free owners of private property created a new social bond between them: the money-relation. Many small and medium-sized family capitals were agencies of the market economy; market situations and business cycles resulted from their competition, unplanned and uncontrollable. There were simply too many other individual private owners, all subject to a precarious and unpredictable market. They all had to exploit their capital; soon it exploited them. To live a life pleasing to God and adequate to the market, the individuals in early capitalism developed a worldly asceticism, which culminated in the hostility to the body and prudishness of the past century, and whose dark shadow still falls on sexual morality, stamping it with contradictions and contraphobic features.

Bourgeois individuality developed in caring for the family's private property. The institution of monogamous marriage (developed long before the bourgeois era) served to protect and increase this property in the course of generations and its formal façade—as a contractual relation between independent individuals of different sexes—concealed materially the slavery of women, who provided housework, sexual satisfaction and procreation as a private service. Sexual gratification was accepted socially only within the framework of this institution: as the heterosexual-genital sexuality of adults in the service of generating legitimate heirs to the family property.

Under the sign of worldly asceticism, all other forms of sexual practice—especially those practiced by the non-bourgeois strata—succumbed to collective repression: early-childhood sexuality was successfully denied; masturbation of juveniles was "treated" as disease; women's spontaneous not male-induced interest in sexual satisfaction was considered an anomaly, sexual intercourse in marriage (resulting in permanent pregnancy) was considered a reward for premarital chastity (virginity). The male's sexuality was reluctantly recognized, but its satisfaction was bound to the precondition of success in professional life. The duty of spouses, especially women, to maintain life-long sexual fidelity should guarantee the legitimacy of the heirs. The complementary institution of prostitution opened up for men a forbidden but tolerated outlet; wives were left with only secret, illegal liaisons.

Classical-bourgeois sexual morality actually knew only the alternative of breeding or immorality. By rewarding the adult's heterosexual-genital sexuality and monopolizing its chances for satisfaction through the institution of marriage, the sexual practice of individuals was tied to the system of collective self-preservation—production and procreation under the conditions of the increasing socialization of work and continuous private appropriation.

Sexual restrictions, carried to exorbitant extremes, apparently were accompanied by a strengthening of anal eroticism and its reaction-formations in socialization. "Sphincter morality" provided valuable libidinous

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contributions to the "drive to amass wealth."[15] Max Weber's "spirit of capitalism," distilled from Calvinistic economic ethics, corresponds to the psychoanalytically interpreted, anal-sadistic, authoritarian social character; specific drive-destinies correspond to the religions' expression of capitalist economics.

With the increasing concentration and centralization of capital, the class of capital-owners and the stratum of functioning capitalists shrank. Small and medium-sized property was absorbed or controlled by large property. The petit-bourgeois form of life lost its total-societal style-formative power. If bourgeois autonomy is no longer accessible to the majority of the population and worldly asceticism no longer is of any use in acquiring and keeping capital (the private capacity for acquisition), then the repressive economic functionalization of sexuality also loses it meaning. The progressive capitalist process of disappropriation tore out the axis of interests of the petit-bourgeois monogamous institution of marriage and took away its *raison d'être.* Marriage survives as a cultural lag. Today, as a rule, within the shell of the traditional institution live people who—along with sexual attraction and care for children born of the relation—are bound together by the necessity of creating a basis for starting into and a haven of retreat from the life of non-independence. Their relation is neither dominated by economic interests reaching across generations, nor does it stand in the service of other goals transcending the private area. With the abolition or relativization of small and middle family capital and economic point of reference for premarital continence and marital fidelity has vanished. If there is no longer any acquired property to leave behind and children are no longer needed for old-age security (except perhaps to stabilize disintegrating relations among couples and to mitigate the loneliness of old-age), but instead they drastically diminish the free time and opportunities for consumption of their parents, then even marital sexual satisfaction loses its orientation toward procreation. This provides the social preconditions to broaden the control over human nature. To the extent that the aim of marriage is no longer to increase the family property and to generate legitimate heirs, pre- and extra-marital relations increase and lead to undesired offspring. Thus, the invention and dissemination of effective and easy-to-use birth-control techniques becomes a social necessity. The change of sexual mores is supported technically by the production of hormonal ovulaton-impeders and simplified methods of sterilization and abortion. The link between sexual gratification and interests of the private-appropriation economy is broken along with the other link—long considered indissoluble—between heterosexual satisfaction and procreation.

The "classical" sexual economy of the bourgeois era consisted in the institutionalization and licensing of one specific form of sexuality—one

15. Otto Fenichel, "The Drive to Amass Wealth." (1934-1938) in Fenichel, *Collected Papers* (New York: Norton, 1954), vol. 2, p. 89-108.

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variant of sexual satisfaction—at the expense of all others. The uncolonialized territories of the continent of sexuality fell into disrepute; poet-conquistadors brought back "the flowers of evil" from those unexplored regions. Collective regression made its presence felt in wishful dreams and nightmares, neurotic symptoms and crimes. Forbidden and penalized sexuality became the promise of a completely different life, the quintessence of withheld freedom, withheld happiness. Conservatives and revolutionaries alike identified the liberation of sexuality with anarchy—for some chaos, for others the end of domination (exploitation).

Romeo and Juliet, who placed individual love above family interests and the institution of arranged marriage and paid for it with their lives, were protagonists of bourgeois individuation. Even in Freud's *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, direct (herteosexual-genital) sexual satisfaction appears as a chance for individuation: the lovers demonstrate against the herd-instinct and the bond to the mass.[16] The victims of the "folk-community" (*Volksgemeinschaft*) pilloried forty years ago in German cities for miscegenation (*Rassenschande*) symbolized the antithesis to the mass: the love of strangers and individuation. Wilhelm Reich, the technologist of orgastic potency,[17] still believed (during his Marxist phase) in the "revolutionary power stemming from satisfied sexuality." According to psychoanalytical theory, the neuroses manifested the general misery in private symptoms. Neurotics were, Freud said, those individuals, for whom—in the established system of renunciations and satisfactions—the general cultural prohibitions became an intolerable burden. Traumas experienced in early childhood—too early, too strong pleasure; too early, overpowering harm—restricted the capacity of the developing ego. So it broke down under the burdens of later crises in life; the neurotics were cast back to infantile, pregenital satisfaction-surrogates and defenses and caught unconsciously under the spell of partial instincts, which unmistakably dominated the sexuality of individuals who had become "perverse." Neuroses were therefore defined as the "negative" counterpart of perversions. The neurotic disturbance of psycho-sexual development made one incapable of work and pleasure and affected genital function (impotence, frigidity). Neurosis-therapy sought to reduce the particular misery of neurotics to the "normal," general misery by strengthening of the ego-function of reality-testing: "...one must not fulfill the demands of one's own needs illegitimately, but must leave them unfulfilled, because only the continuance of so many unfulfilled demands can develop the power to change the order of society."[18]

In the most highly developed capitalist societies, during the period of prosperity following World War II, a change of the sexual economy was in the

16. Cf. Freud, "Group Psychology and Analysis of the Ego" (1921), *St. Ed.*, vol. 18, pp. 123f. and 140.

17. Cf. on Reich: H. Dahmer, *Libido und Gesellschaft. Studien über Freud und die Freudsche Linke* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1973) Part II, Ch. 3.

18. S. Freud, "Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious." (1905) *St. Ed.*, vol. 8, p. 110.

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making. Late capitalism offers the wage-worker majority of the population bread and cake (a private sphere generally free of political control and moral regimentation) and play—including sexual play. Work controlled by others and impotence as to political and economic decisions, which are made by "power elites," are tolerated almost without protest in everyday life. The accelerated expansion of potentials of destruction, the increasing gap between the Northern and the Southern hemispheres, global inflation, crisis and unemployment figures, destruction of the environment and other effects of the capitalist economy are accepted as "fate" by the vast majority of the population.

The current revolution in sexual mores indicates mainly a change of the relation between the economic and the sexual spheres of life. Sexuality's mode of integration is changing: indirect functionalization is replacing the direct one. Selective-repressive subsumption of sexual life under economic interests is being replaced by its release in a natural park surrounded by isolation walls. No longer tied to economic and procreative interests, the sexual needs of individuals have lost some of their relevance for their private life and for the social system. When licensed, they stood in the service of self-preservation and procreation; when prohibited, they endangered the social order. The removal from taboo, the demystification of the sexual world by no means resulted in the collapse of bourgeois institutions (private property, family, state and market), but took place in a reservation in the midst of these institutions. To this extent, when it finally arrived the sexual "revolution" remained without social effects.

The nature and function of the new sexual morality were already anticipated therapeutically and literarily in the thirties: Wilhelm Reich developed the therapeutic program for the technical creation of a pleasure-capacity undisturbed by biographical and social history:[19] "When we speak of psychological health, we mean. . . a psychic state characterized by ability for social achievement and adaptation as well as by a predominantly subjective sense of well-being."[20] And: "In order to destroy psychoneurotic or psychotic symptoms it is unnecessary and even harmful to delve into all details of the countless pathological ramifications; instead, opening up the core of the biosystem and establishing a balanced energy economy will automatically make the symptoms disappear, since, seen energetically, they are results of a disorderly energy metabolism in the biosystem."[21] In 1932 Aldous Huxley wrote his vision of a one-dimensional society, in which conformity of thought and behavior are assured, among other things, with the help of standardized sexual gratification: "As political and economic freedom diminishes, sexual

19. Cf. Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia. Reflexionen aus dem beschaedigten Leben* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1951), p. 106 ("Aufforderung zum Tanz," 1944).

20. Reich, "Weitere Bemerkungen über die therapeutische Bedeutung der Genitallibido," in *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, XI, 1925, p. 307.

21. Reich, "The Schizophrenic Split " (1948) in Reich, *Character Analysis* (London: Vision Press, 1958), chap. XVI, p. 402.

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freedom tends compensatingly to increase. And the dictator (unless he needs cannon fodder and families with which to colonize empty or conquered territories) will do well to encourage that freedom. In conjunction with the freedom to daydream under the influence of dope and movies and the radio, it will help to reconcile his subjects to the servitude which is their fate."[22]

Henry Miller (in 1934 and 1939) published his autobiographical "Zodiac" novels, whose bohemian hero lustfully tries out the desublimated-isolated, promiscuous sexual practice—the ideal of the new sexual economy—in an intoxication of freedom (with mystical overtones): "You have to realize, Henry my boy, that you're dealing with cutthroats, with cannibals, only they're dressed up, shaved, perfumed, but that's all they are: cannibals. The best thing for you to do now, Henry, is to go and get yourself a frosted chocolate and when you sit at the soda fountain keep your eyes peeled and forget about the destiny of man because you might still find yourself a nice lay and a good lay will clean your ballbearings out and leave a good taste in your mouth whereas this only brings on dyspepsia, dandruff, halitosis, encephalitis."[23]

The sexual morality accepted by the majority today is still marriage-centered, but more "liberal" than the sexual practice of those who represent it.[24] Class- and strata-specific differences in behavior and attitudes, as they existed under the cover of the formerly prevalent bourgeois sexual morality, have been levelled. The new morality is not a class attribute. As Schmidt and Sigusch write in their investigation of "worker-sexuality:" "Lower and middle strata were and are being seized by a total-societal process of liberalization. In the course of this process the patterns of sexual behavior in all strata-groups are changing and converging toward a general pattern which was and is typical of no particular social stratum and seems to be binding on all society."[25] In the choice of sex-partners (except for prostitution), class- and strata-boundaries are rarely crossed; the standards of sexual behavior, however, have become homogeneous. The integration of the working force (the "affluent," "stable working class") is realizing itself also in the field of sexual practice: "There is, at least in the younger generation, no separate specifically lower-class sexuality."[26]

Representatives of "critical theory" have characterized the new sexual economy sociologically as "repressive de-sublimation"; Horkheimer and

22. A. Huxley, *Brave New World*. (New York: Harper, 1950), p. xxi (Foreword, 1949).
23. H. Miller, *Tropic of Capricorn* (New York: Grove, 1961), p. 103.
24. Cf. Hans Giese and Gunter Schmidt, *Studentensexualität: Verhalten und Einstellung. Eine Umfrage an 12 westdeutschen Universitaeten* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1968), esp. Ch. 13. Also Gunter Schmidt and Volkmar Sigusch, *Arbeiter-Sexualitaet: Eine empirische Untersuchung an jungen Industriearbeitern* (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1971), esp. Ch. 5.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 142. Cf. also Hubert Bacia, *Themen zur Sexualität*, 2nd revised ed. (Universitätsverlag Bochum, no year), p. 92f.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 141. "The sexual ideology of the West German lower class can be summed up as anti-reproductive, premaritally promiscuous, love- and partner-centered, requiring fidelity, marriage- and family-oriented, partially pleasure-affirming and limitedly egalitarian." (*Ibid.*, p. 120).

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Adorno first formulated the thesis, Marcuse developed it systematically.[27] Fragmentarily and in neutralized forms, this interpretation also has entered into sex-education literature. It says that worldly asceticism at the presently attained level of work productivity, of the real and really possible satisfaction of needs is becoming increasingly obsolete. However, the de-sublimation and re-sexualization developing without adequate consciousness under continuing capitalist conditions of production is repressive. First, because the particular unburdening of individuals, the granting of isolated areas of freedom makes their impotence as to social development and its effects more bearable and weakens social perceptivity, the "examination of reality." The freer sexual behavior is not made possible by way of the individual's own psychic work at internalized superego-structures, but is practiced at the order of external superego-representatives. This withdraws the change in sexual mores from the responsibility of the subjects and entangles them deeper in dependency. The toning down of official sexual morality's demands removes guilt from the pleasure of a healthy sex life.

Precondition for the repressive de-sublimation is a progressive dissociation of the spheres of life, which however still retain some coordination. The direct satisfaction which the daily vacation in the private area (the free sphere of reproduction) allows, helps preserve the system of alienated work, even when men deny this with the illusion that their work is only a means to the end of "real" living beyond the work-day drudgery and frustrations. Secondly, this de-sublimation is repressive because it takes back without ado the forms of cultural expression and life which grew on the soil of drive-renunciation and in which the work of displacement and the dreams of entire generations crystalized. The results of sublimation-achievements—ego and cultural ideals, reconciliatory anticipations of religious, aesthetic and metaphysical traditions—were as antithetically contrary to the everyday life as were the repressed drive-wishes which occasioned the formation of such superstructures. But the new sexual economy offers long-withheld direct satisfactions and dismisses the longing for a completely different life, depicting as "obsolete" the wishful dream which unfulfilled desire had projected. The new satisfactions, which need no metaphysics, fit without contradiction into everyday life.

The social libido-economy today stands under the sign of isolation. It replaces suppression, taboo formation, and repression—the defense-mechanisms with whose help society traditionally sought to protect itself from the individuals' luxuriating-ecstatic, asocial drive-impulses. The neurotic who uses isolation as a defense has—so writes Otto Fenichel—"not forgotten his pathogenic traumata but has lost trace of their connections and their emotional significance. He shows the same resistance to a demonstration of the true connections that a hysteric shows to the reawakening of his repressed

27. Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (1955), chap. X. *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), chap. 3.

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memories. Thus, here again a countercathexis is operative; its operation consists in keeping apart that which actually belongs together.... Spatial intervals are arranged so that certain things (representing ideas that are to be kept apart) cannot touch each other.... Temporal intervals are planned so that after an action there is an intermission keeping the act from impinging upon any other one.... The most important special case of this defense mechanism is the isolation of an idea from the emotional cathexis that originally was connected with it.... Many children try to solve conflicts by isolating certain spheres of their lives from one another, such as school from home or social life from the secrets of their loneliness; one of the two isolated spheres usually represents instinctual freedom and the other good behavior."[28] Sexuality which is no longer tied to economic and procreative goals is assigned to a natural park sequestered from the spheres of work and political action, in which almost nothing more is natural, everything is staged, and whose existence, though it has health value, remains without effects for the general destiny of society and nature. Sexual practice is not only isolated from other practices, but also from its sublimations, from erotic culture and from the aura traditionally clinging to forbidden happiness. So neutralized, it loses its significance for the individuals' lives and for social history. De-sublimated libido has lost its subversive potential; deprived of its venom and sterilized, it is incorporated into class society's arsenal of compensations.

To this socially performed separation of the spheres of life corresponds the Taylorization of individuals, who take the jobs as they are, do what is asked of them, experience market fluctuations and politics as "fate," incredulously play the mature voter at elections, and in their leisure-time gratefully consume what is offered to them. Socially permitted compensations support conformism. Non-conformism would risk everything that makes men's lives bearable. Isolation of the vital spheres and practices is the condition for "happiness" and health; interference of the spheres means disturbance and impairs the capacity for pleasure and work.

Propagated by the commercial mass media, the new sexual morality of the property-less owners of labor and sex-appeal outraces their sexual practice and stands in liberating-oppressive contrast to it. The creation of a consumption-stimulating world of sexual illusion, which soothes the superego and feeds the wishes of the id, serves to prepare the senses and language for the new sexual freedom. The sex-education media, which build on the normative force of audio-visual presentations, promote the leap over the shadow that has fallen on the individual souls who have become aware that the class-society is—behind the façade of satisfied everyday life and commodity-abundance—a terror-regime in permanence. The new sexual morality seeks to assure the orgastic potency of the individuals

28. Otto Fenichel, *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1945), p. 155ff.

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prophylactically through isolation against disturbances. A healthy sex life is supposed to console them, whatever their lot otherwise may be. The satisfaction sought is not an end, but a means of preserving the pleasure of life amid impotence and disaster. Its price is a new kind of psychic impotence (which replaces the psychically-conditioned physical one).

The new sexual morality is the reverse of the old one. What the old one removed from sight—the genitals and their function—the new one makes the center of attention. The mastery of sexuality, an area for ages feared yet found enticing, is now supposed to be achieved in the manner of "contraphobic action": "Sometimes the original anxiety situations are not avoided but are sought, at least under certain conditions; the person shows a preference for the very situation of which he is apparently afraid; even more frequently a person develops a preference for situations of which he formerly had been afraid.... The pleasure achieved by 'counterphobic' behavior, however, is not identical with the original instinctual pleasure. The obsessive manner of the search for the once feared situations shows that the anxiety has not been completely overcome.... The counterphobic pleasure is a repetition of the child's 'functional' pleasure of 'I do not need to be afraid any more'...." [29]

The sexual continent is being opened technologically, demystified and colonized: special cameras give us enlarged photographs and inside views of the bodily zones so long tabooed. Like legalized peeping-Toms we practice the neutralized perspective of gynecologists and dermatologists. The pleasure-blinded gaze at the body of a beloved person, fusing it with the image of a Helen or Adonis and with that of the old incest-objects, is overlaid with the objectifying look of the clinical specialist. Sexual reactions and functions are explored experimentally: apparatuses register the intensity and duration of stimulations and measure the physical symptoms of the various phases of pleasure. Physicalism is celebrating triumphs: the net effect is a de-demonization. The boundary between the sexual-scientific instructional film and pornographic has been abolished. Visual objectification and endless repetition negate any attachment of shame, excitement or fear to the viewed objects, and have a desensitizing effect. Porno-booklets and porno-films concentrate on the once denied objects, showing unknown-indifferent actors of an endless chain of copulation, the genitals in permanent action. But the peeping-Tom lust of traumatized Puritans is unquenchable. The inability to live the myth promulgated by the advertising media drives them to endless foreplay; their belated education reaches no end.

Unmastered sexuality traditionally comprised the antithesis to the (respectively accepted) principle of social reality—heaven and hell; scientifically demystified and isolated, it is to function as a private playgound and recreation center. Forbidden sexuality developed centrifugally, eroticizing the whole world. Now, centripetally contracted, it is to be

29. *Ibid.*, p. 480.

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"liberated." The anti-authoritarian student movement of ten years ago gave an idea of the potential of a no-longer isolated "new sensitivity"; today the new feminist movement is articulating disgust at isolated (and patriarchically structured) sexuality.

The pleasure from isolated sexual satisfaction is a restricted one. The official removal of the prohibition strikes at its core. The individuals of bourgeois society are only indirectly associated—therefore their "unsociable sociality" (*"ungesellige Geselligkeit,"* Kant). All other kinds of social ties are peripheral to the objective dependence of the class individuals, merely embellishing and serving it. After the isolating-permissive sexual economy has replaced the societal integration of the licensed one and the suppression of forbidden sexuality, sexual attraction has lost its binding force. It alone can no longer give duration to human relations. The permitted pleasure does not want to last forever. The coldness of exchange relations pervades the relations of the sexes; they cannot warm themselves at the tiny fires of recently propagated sexual satisfaction. Happiness abandons the sphere of sexual consumption opened up to the individuals without regard to their ability to enjoy it. What remains is "fun"; that is quite a lot, but not enough. Advertisement has taken over the utopian illusions which no longer gleam around men's sexual practice; it makes a lucrative game of the unfulfilled longings of yesterday and today, which it profanes. Shreds of the illusion of erotic happiness still have to camouflage commodities with the most anti-human use-value, and the lowest quality. Sexualized advertisement is the mockery of individuals incapable of "using" the new sexual freedom, is the parasite of their lost eroticism. Every sexual relation, like all mediated immediacy, promises more than just sexual pleasure. Even constricted-isolated pleasure strives for more than recreation or relaxation which need no justification. But love no longer has to be realized against society's opposition and achieves nothing in society. Romance, with its shimmering after-aura, remains sterile.

The taboo that once covered the sexual sphere, is today imposed on the really possible, completely different arrangement of social life, and on the wish, thought and political action that aim for it. As protectors of repressive sexual morals, the courts and the executive branch are carrying on only a weak rearguard action; but they implement their office as relentlessly as ever, wherever business profit is endangered.

Sex education is aware of its impotence and yet it constantly forgets it. It takes note of the critical thesis of the repressiveness of de-sublimation, which it furthers, but then it goes about its daily routine. It hesitantly ratifies, with secret moralizing, the developing process of changing attitudes and behavior, but understands itself as a pioneer of emancipation.

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Notes and Commentary:

CULTURE AND NEGATIVITY: NOTES TOWARD A THEORY OF THE CARNIVAL

by David Gross

A lot can be learned about a culture by observing how it deals with the underside of life—with all those things it decides, for whatever reason, are unacceptable or beyod the pale.

Every society, like every individual, holds up an image of what it *thinks* it is, but this is never the whole of what it *actually* its. Underneath the façade, in the interstices of social life and in the hidden spaces still considered taboo, one can often find the key to understanding the official world of surfaces. Toulouse-Lautrec understood this when he chose to paint the demimonde of Paris, calling it a "mirror of the bad dreams of contemporary society." He knew that the Pigalle prostitute not only compels us to see her opposite, the bourgeois *citoyen*, in a different light; she also discloses something essential about the whole milieu of which they are both a part, the one as an outrage to respectability, the other as a perfect model of it.

Michel Foucault has made a similar point by arguing that the way in which madness has been dealt with in the West expresses something essential about what sanity is understood to be.[1] In the Middle Ages the madman was integrated into culture and given a certain place and symbolic importance. During the sixteenth century, however, a radical perceptual shift took place as the madman began not only to be viewed differently (as an "insane person") but treated differently (rounded up and anchored on "ships of fools"). From this point on the rejection and isolation of "otherness" increased until, by the eighteenth century, the madman was set apart altogether by being institutionalized. This meant that, figuratively if not literally, the most cultivated salons of the period existed along side the most unspeakable madhouses, and the highest talk about humanity coincided with some of the lowest forms of inhumanity.[2] The legacy of this kind of compartmentalization remains today where socially useful distinctions between normality and abnormality, identity and difference, continue to be held onto with a vengence.

II

In many ways the modern day carnival bears the same relationship to the established culture that the prostitute and madman do. All three, for example, have been separated off from normal social life and treated as "other." Yet at the same time each not only accurately reflects the whole (albeit in an inverse way, as through a *camera obscure*), but also provides a critique of the very culture which rejects it. In what follows I want to make a few comments about the role and function of the carnival in contemporary American experience. My assumption is that the carnival, when looked at in its larger social context, offers clues to some aspects of American life

1. Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization,* trans. Richard Howard (New York, 1973).
2. Virtually no one, except anomalies like de Sade, noticed the contradictions. It was not until Freud began to listen to the mentally ill on their own terms that any real dialogue was established between these two estranged worlds. This may be the essence of genius: to see connections where others see none (for instance, between German classical philosophy and the proletariat).

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which would otherwise not be noticed. If deciphered in the right way, it can perhaps reveal more about society than society, taken on its own terms, would be willing to reveal about itself.

The European forerunners of the carnival—i.e., the medieval fairs and the traveling troupes of entertainers—were a familiar part of everyday life. From the Middle Ages through the eighteenth century it was not an unusual sight in the towns and villages of Europe to see itinerate performers and peddlers of one sort or another, probably on a weekly if not a daily basis. Included in this group were traveling acrobats, jongleurs, clowns, sleight-of-hand artists, animal trainers, actors, exhibitors of exotic animals, magicians, sellers of household wares, card sharks, hucksters, dancing girls and whores. (Bergman has given a portrait of one such traveling ensemble in *The Seventh Seal.*) What these independent, pre-carnival types did, whether intended or not, was the following. First, they provided popular entertainment and amusement. Second, they offered at least momentary relief from hard work by creating a different kind of space and mood as an antidote to the routines of daily life. And last, but very important, they introduced into a given, fixed world the experience of negativity and otherness. The Church, for instance, frowned upon this lowlife because it was not tamed by religion. Instead it seemed beyond control, moving always at the periphery of society and never at its stable center where it could be managed. Hence, it took on an aura of looseness, sinfulness, deviance. The early entertainers and performers were condemned by priests as immoral and ungodly precisely because they were a kind of free-floating negativity—a negativity which could not be harnessed but which nevertheless, or perhaps for that very reason, appealed to people's imagination. (By contrast, the TV culture of today provides relaxation and distraction from work but without negativity. Where entertainment was once communal and public it is now largely private; there is not even a different space or mood but only a continuous succession of programs passively observed in the familiar surroundings of one's living room.)

Gradually this essentially medieval phenomenon was institutionalized in three directions: toward the fair, the circus, and the carnival. By being fragmented and formalized in this way, each part lost much of its potential impact and negativity. And yet these reduced, segmented forms are all anyone has ever experienced in this century.

The fair, for example, picked up in name and spirit that part of the medieval fair which was commercial and mercantile. Today it is mainly farm-oriented, though local businessmen also have booths and displays. As a side attraction rides are usually brought in for the kids, and horse racing, band concerts, and the like for adults. Nevertheless, the central function of the fair lies beyond these distractions. Its three-fold purpose is now to convey new information about developments in farm machinery and agricultural technology, to exhibit and award the best breeds of livestock and poultry, and to familiarize the population at large with the latest innovations in business merchandising. This last aspect was grafted onto the fair at the end of the last century as a result of the "Industrial Expositions" which were so popular at the time. These were massive festivals celebrating science, progress, and industrial invention; they were designed to overwhelm the masses with what was being done for their well-being and sell them on the virtues of the free enterprise system.

The circus, on the other hand, inherited the part of the medieval fair which centered on (1) animal training and the exhibition of exotic animals (now brought together under a single dome; the "big top"), and (2) feats of skill by performers

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including acrobats, tightrope walkers, bareback riders, jugglers, and even clowns (who were at one time among the highest parid circus personnel because they were considered the equivalent of bona fide actors). Where the fair became pervaded by a business atmosphere the circus tried to maintain an essentially artisan image. Even today circus performers still view themselves as professional theater people, meaning that in terms of status they feel they are many rungs above mere carnival riff-raff. This is ironic since the circus has, in fact, lost much of the aura and character of an intimate art form—something that now seems to exist only in Europe and Russia (where the circus is a state-run institution with high prestige). When Barnum introduced the three-ring, as compared to the European one-ring, circus in 1881, the viewing experience was converted into a panoramic spectacle where the audience was confronted with numerous things happening simultaneously. A focused quality of performance was sacrificed for an undifferentiated quantity of visual activity, with the result that a person's concentration was, and still, is, noticeably lessened by trying to see everything at once and hence nothing well.[3]

Finally, the carnival developed that aspect of the medieval street fair having to do with gambling and tests of skill, the display of unusual or deformed human types (freaks), and the presentation of seemingly risqué amusements (like dancing girls). Added to this has been a new phenomenon: the introduction of "rides," something not mechanically possible until the beginning of this century but now central to the carnival as it presently exists. In fact most large midways have been set up to give equal emphasis to all aspects: the "front end" for games and concessions, the "back end" for rides, the burlesque revue, and the freak show.

Unlike the fair and circus, which were largely "cleaned up" by the 1920s, the carnival has not been—at least until the last decade, of which more will be said below. Where a commercial-agricultural mood dominates the fair, and a spirit of "wholesome family entertainment" characterizes the circus, the carnival suggests a more unsavory atmosphere which, for many, borders on the grotesque. From the perspective of ordinary social life it is not far-fetched to say that the carnival is generally perceived in the following way: as (1) the locus of undesireable types and crippled identities: vagabonds, gypsies, ne'er-do-wells, prostitutes, the entire detritus of the culture including all those who could not "fit in" anywhere else; (2) a floating, quasi-criminal environment which is not only ugly and tasteless, but lurid, unrespectable, unsafe—a place where the vulgarity of American life is not only casually accepted, but actually put on display; (3) an occasion for the suspension of ordinary rules of behavior; a time in which voyeurism, for example, is permitted without the need to feel embarrassed, and where there is a tolerance for being verbally assaulted by game hawkers without being offended since it is accepted as "part of the atmosphere;" and finally, (4) a descent, psychologicaly speaking into the realm of the sexual and irrational where a different climate obtains, as in Hesse's "magic theater." The carnival seems to represent the repressed side of society's consciousness, a side which nonetheless returns periodically to haunt the established culture with all it does not wish to acknowledge about itself.

III

On the surface, then, the carnival would appear to embody negativity. From one

3. On this see Marcello Truzzi, "The Decline of the American Circus," *Sociology and Everyday Life*, ed. Marcello Truzzi (Engelwood Cliffs, 1968), pp. 314-22.

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point-of-view, at least, it offers not only an antipode to normal, routinized life, but a greater sense of freedom and a way to "live dangerously" outside the parameters of middle class conventions. But it would be a mistake to see the carnival this way. If it ever was a genuinely liberating area of experience it is not any longer. At its core the carnival of today is primarily two things: a controlled confrontation with otherness and an example of what might be called "abstract negativity."

It is a controlled confrontation with otherness because of the way in which the carnival is forced (by local authorities) to present itself to its patrons, and because of the way the patrons consequently relate to their experience of being there. Unlike the early street fairs, today's carnival comes to town by rail or truck, is permitted only a brief stay, and is not allowed in the center of cities but only at the edges where there is little chance of significantly penetrating the fabric of everyday life. (Sometimes even carnival personnel have been unwelcome in the cities; in the past even more than now they were treated as undesireables and advised to stay in their quarters to avoid arrest.) In this way the anarchic side of the carnival is contained and its unsettling aspects circumscribed or subdued. People attend, but they do so for catharsis and release, not because they catch so much as a glimpse of any meaningful alternative to the status quo. Otherness is still there but it is muted and harmless. Even the most bizzare carnival types can hardly shock anyone anymore since their equals are to be found in abundance in the photographs of Diane Arbus or the movies of Fellini. It is true, a kind of excitement may come from a squeamish familiarity with what is odd or grotesque but this is not always a gain. It can easily lead to a lessened sensitivity toward everything—or to the attitude of being cool and undisturbed about what is, in fact, monstrous and terrible.[4] A potential radical otherness, then, is reduced to a narrow, unattractive otherness. The net result is that carnival life as a critique of the established reality appears absurd if not laughable. The lumpen existence on the midway threatens no one, least of all the middle class who know they have nothing to fear there. Curiously enough, the circus was disarmed in precisely the opposite way by being officially taken in and co-opted with embraces. When, in its heyday (1880-1920), the circus came to town it was frequently greeted by the mayor and welcomed with public speeches. The circus parade down Main Street was a major event, sometimes lasting four or five hours.[5] By contrast, carnival people invariably arrive and leave town silently and without fanfare; whatever danger to stability they may represent is either diffused or carefully straitjacketed.

Besides being a controlled encounter with otherness, the carnival is also the embodiment of what could be termed abstract negativity. By this I mean that the carnival experience by its very nature (not just because of what the authorities have done to it) has inherent limitations which prevent it from offering a valid set of alternate life possibilites. Though in some ways it represents the negation of the status quo, it does so by being simply a negative negation—one which contains very little that is concretely positive or which can be build upon in praxis.

In another context Shierry Weber has clarified the concept of abstract negation as I am using it here. Keeping the carnival in mind her words seem very much to the point.

4. Philip Caputo has demonstrated this with regard to the soldier in Vietnam in his recent novel *A Rumor of War* (New York, 1977). Gloria Emerson has pointed out the same attitude on the homefront in her *Winners and Losers* (New York, 1976).

5. See Marcello Truzzi, *op. cit.*, p. 318; also Marian May, *Circus! From Rome to Ringling* (New York, 1956), pp. 251ff.; and George Chindahl, *A History of the Circus in America* (Caldwell, Ohio, 1959, pp. 118-57.

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"Abstract negation," she writes, "is [always something] *external*: to a gesture, an object, a style, it opposes a counter-gesture, -object, -style. But it does not negate the whole complex of forces which are concretized in the gesture, object, style." Furthermore, even though abstract negation stands against the system it "is in fact not total; it is an improper response to the perception that the system as a whole is false; . . . for what is false is the perverted form that governs the significance of any elements in the system. An aggregate of external negations does not achieve the total negation of the system." And she concludes with the most important point: "Insofar as [an abstract] negation is not itself part of a project of counter-integration, it simply aids the forces of disintegration, increasing passivity, and so on."[6] In all these respects, the carnival would have to be considered an example of abstract negativity. It offers no real alternative to the given; in fact if one looks closely it becomes obvious that the carnival substantially reproduces existing attitudes, even if in an apparently convoluted form (i.e., there is the same alienation, exploitation and turning of people into objects that one finds in the dominant culture).

In sum, the argument I am making is that the carnival, in its pre-industrial setting, may have contained the potential for *real negation* but by the middle of the twentieth century it became merely an *abstract negation*. Having said this much it is possible to make another point: that during the last decade the carnival has moved into a further stage of *pseudo-negation*, which is to say, it now represents no negation at all. Though the line between abstract and pseudo-negation is by no means firm, it does seem that whatever otherness the carnival traditionally embodied has been eroded due to recent changes the carnival itself has undergone since the 1960s.

Taking the Royal American Shows as an example (since it is the largest carnival now touring the country), the following things could be mentioned which set it apart from what it was during the 1950s and before. First, it has a midway which is drastically reduced from what it used to be, though not so much in size as in the variety of experiences it offers. A few years ago the Royal American Shows had over a half dozen under-canvas events; now it has none. The vaudeville acts and burlesque revues, even the freak show, have been eliminated, ostensibly out of a concern for public decency.[7] By contrast, the rides have grown in size and number (now over fifty) and have become virtually the main attraction. The result is that any confrontation with difference and otherness has for all practical purposes been reduced to zero. Secondly, the carnival owners and managers have become increasingly concerned about cleaning up their image just as the circus had successfully done long ago. The unsavory atmosphere, they figure, has cost them money since people are now more willing to register complaints when they feel they've been cheated, or else simply stay away from the carnival altogether.[8] Hence there is a concerted effort to make the Royal American Shows more legitimate by giving it a better moral reputation; but this, too, has destroyed what residue of negativity it still had. Thirdly, there is a loss of imagination in the carnival compared to twenty or thirty years ago. At a time when people's fantasies are captivated more by Star Wars and Close Encounters than by anything

6. Shierry Weber, "Individuation as Praxis," *Critical Interruptions,* ed. Paul Breines (New York, 1970), pp. 38-39. Author's italics.

7. See John Lentz, "Passing of the Side Show, *Today's Health*, XLII (March 1964), pp. 48-51; and "No More Rubes," *Time,* September 29, 1958, pp. 41-42.

8. Theodore M. Dembroski, "Hanky Panks and Group Games versus Alibis and Flats: the Legitimate and Illegitimate of the Carnival's Front End," *Journal of Popular Culture*, VI (1973), no. 3, pp. 567-82.

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the midway can offer, it would take a great creative effort to keep a sense of novelty constantly before the public. The Royal American Shows has not been able to make such an effort. As a result it has become an antiquated institution which can no longer instill any trace of a critical consciousness in its patrons. Even the "romantic mystique of the traveling community," which the carnival could once count on as part of its attraction, seems now to hold little interest for the general population.

Like Kafka's Hunger Artist, the carnival has been pushed further and further into insignificance. It continues to exist today as only one of numerous sources of potential negativity that have dried up or been subsumed into the larger social whole. Any thought about reviving a "negative carnival" would be absurd; but something may be learned about the critical importance of both otherness and negativity by noting how the carnival, and other institutions like it, have lost these qualities with hardly anyone being aware of it.

QUESTIONING POLITICS [1]

by Olivier Mongin

Whatever the domain in question, the vocabulary of contemporary research cannot nelp but make clear that the major concern is the study of relations of power, domination or authority—terms that, by the way, are often used for one another. Thus, each issue of the journal edited by Pierre Bourdieu, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales,* gives an example of a different method of examining the mechanisms of domination. Is this interest in the phenomenon of power the sign of a return of political analysis to a focal position? Nothing could be less certain.

Look at the way the contemporary intellectual motor functions. One begins from the hypothesis of a *super power* (*grand pouvoir*)—the essence of power—which is taken as diffracting itself into multiple regions of the social sphere, taking on the most diverse forms, be they institutional or not. Thus, we have this undifferentiated super power and the multiple micro-powers that it crosses or, rather, into which it flows. Thus, the political, legal, pedagogical, economic, etc. powers are subdivisions or reflections of the super power. This is why there is so little questioning of the specific texture of each of these regions of power. The globalization of the problem leads rather to denouncing the eternal vice of power, and has as its counterpart—usually implicitly—a dream of generalized anarchy or, at least, the recommendation to adopt a permanent resistance to all powers: there exists only the bad power that irrigates, or rather, pollutes, the differentially stratified soil of a society.

But in this case, what is the situation of the political power? Either one takes it as that easily fixed place called the state where the other powers are catalyzed; or one looks at it simply as one place of power among others—more precisely, as the most intense place of power. This procedure postulates the analogy among the powers, since political power makes sense as an aspect of a power spread out everywhere, or else as the ultimate finality of all the other powers. Consequently, one doesn't worry about an analytic mode specific to the political power.

Contemporary thought, well illustrated by Michel Foucault, refuses to identify the

1. Originally published in *Esprit*, July-August 1976, pp. 38-54. Translated by Dick Howard.

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political power with a simple instrument or intermediary of the dominant class. It sees it, in the last resort, as a social mechanism that is found everywhere. But this leads, in a different manner than with Marxism, to avoiding any theory of the political.

As opposed to that position, I think that political power is not reducible to that undifferentiated super power, that it is not one power among many, analogous to any other form of power. If the political power plays a primordial role insofar as it makes possible all the other powers, it is nonetheless fundamentally different from them.

As I will try to show, one only avoids the question of the political after one has abusively reduced it; one makes the political invalid only in function of a particular analysis of the state-machine.

Thus, I will first of all present a number of works which are in a hurry to do away either with the political in general, or more precisely with the state. The problem is that the need of the political which the one group announces harmonizes strangely with the end of history and the re-emergence of a denatured and moribund metaphysics, while the anti-statism of the others is only the sign of a certain totalitarian fatalism which is incapable of thinking about democracy outside of the Marxist critique of bourgeois democracy. Secondly, I will try to make more precise the question of the political by using works as different as those of La Boétie and Rosanvallon. In order to clarify what is at issue in the political, I will look at the position of the sociologist vis-à-vis the state. Perhaps then it will be more conceivable that the political is not reducible to the question of the state—as if the place of the state were given from eternity, as if the state were thinkable outside of us, outside of our reference to the law—a reference that the state represents and exploits.

I. Whoever plays the angel. . . desires the Gulag!

Ils disent à present qu'au dela de leur vue.
La grèle les effrai plus que la neige des morts.
(René Char)

For the authors of *The Angel,*[2] Guy Lardreau and Christian Jambet, it is no longer even a question of de-emphasizing the political, of reducing the political power merely to any other figure of power. The task is to free oneself definitely from the political, to exile oneself forever from the country of politics.

Bernard-Henry Lévy brings together Clavel, the two authors of *The Angel,* and Glucksmann—although it is not certain that one can associate the latter to them so easily. He feels that a decisive question is posed by all these thinkers, the question of the "choice between the wager of rebellion and the political conception of the world."[3] In the political world, according to Lévy, there would exist only violence and relations of power (*force*). This reasoning is sadly famous: the political is an eternal power game, a weird world in which a few dominating masters confront the dominated, who themselves actually are seeking to submit. The conclusion is that one has to put an end to this world!

In fact, these authors, who have had a double experience, know something about this world. They lived the great Maoist period, which took itself as the last hope and final wave of politics. It was an experience that ended in a resounding failure, since of course the relations of power re-emerged nonetheless! "This much is an absolute certainty: We can no longer be concerned to be militants. The good reason for this is

2. Paris, 1976.
3. *Le Nouvel Observateur,* April 26, 1976.

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that militantism carries with it the image of the 'permanent,'[4] of the importantion of knowledge, of specialists of the revolution; and that we no longer want to deal with that.... We are not afraid to say it: we were Stalinists because we were political. And we aimed at the same time at a cultural revolution because at the same time we gave up politics."[5]

Moreover, as good children of the epoch, they read, loved and consumed Lacan—going as far as parricide. They learned from Lacan, and more explicitly from one of his disciples, Pierre Legendre, the author of *L'amour du censeur.*[6] They learned that there is always somewhere a master; that there is always a master and the mass of his subjects. Thus, there is no longer room for a belief in politics, for one will never stop giving oneself little masters who are always there. But careful! The people can only love its masters: there is a desire of submission, a love of the censor. The problem is that Freud never said that the father "in person" made himself into the loved one. Rather, Freud said that the absence of the father was the origin of the law. Thus, the assertion that the censor makes himself be loved is not especially Freudian, since only the lack creates the desire of love. One sees, then, that the entire debate is played out around a debatable understanding of the law.[7]

What then to Lardreau and Jambet propose? That we become "angels," and therewith that we metaphysically found Manichaeanism. Since the political is definitely assimilated to Stalinism, to evil, there is nothing left to do but to invoke the possibility of a second history, the history of rebels. "We saved ourselves by the certainty that never left us, and which henceforth has purified itself: that there is a breaking in two, a Manachaeanism. There is not one history or 'n' histories, there are two. And this is to be reconstructed...the independence of rebellion, which critique must exercise and affirm."[8] It is no longer the time when the rebel (*révolté*) should confront the master on the very ground of his domination, where he is condemned never to get rid of him or else always to resemble him, to desire his power. Rather, it is the time of the absolute rebel (*rebelle*),[9] freed of the master, absolutely unattached, radically cut off.[10]

To purify the rebel, the revolutionary, is thus to think a double history. Manichaeanism is historical. There is that history of our present, of our politics, *and* the other history, that of the rebel. But is not that pretended history of the rebel simply foreign to history—the history of our struggles and contradictions—once it points to an imaginary terrain, a terrain without law, without master; a place of discourse, as Lardreau and Jambet put it?

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4. I.e., the full-time person paid by the Party. [Translator's note.]
5. Lardreau and Jambet, in *Magazine Littéraire*, May 1976.
6. Paris, 1974.
7. I don't want to take up here a critical reading of Legendre's book since I am only interested in the usage of it made in *The Angel.* Nonetheless, one should note that Legendre, whose thesis consists in seeing in canon law and scholastic theology of the 13th century the essential historical source of authority and the love of the censor, simply forgets the simultaneous appearance of communal law in the 13th century.
8. *L'Ange, op.cit.*, p. 230.
9. Note that the term "rebel" is the one preferred by the "new philosophers." The "révolté"—used just above and translated as "rebel"—was Camus' term: *L'Homme révolte—The Rebel.* As usual, in their rush to be "new," the "new philosophers" neglect Camus, whose re-reading today is more valuable, because more rigorous, than theirs. [Translator's note.]
10. One might err here: what a vast literature of classic political theory had said of the tyrant, the authors of *The Angel* now apply to the rebel. Only the *name* of the tyrant would be changed...!

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How are we to justify this worthy metaphysical leap from our common history to the history—or rather, the non-history—of a few rebels? Here is where the religious enters, permitting one to stand at a distance from the political: "The Christianity of Maurice Clavel is precisely that by which he escapes from any political view of things."[11]

What, then, are the foundations of the discourse of the rebel? In what does the world of discourse oppose itself to that of the law and of the master? "I thus see what one will object to me: how can one say, at once, that Freud is the true discourse on desire... and yet attempt to maintain the discourse which... affirms the autonomy of the discourse of the rebel?"[12] Lardreau replies immediately to this objection by means of a sudden distinction to which we already pointed between the discourse of the master and the discourse—between the law and the discourse. "All of desire is that of the master... not all of discourse... the discourse of the master is not the discourse."[13]

But aren't the dice loaded from the outset? To affirm that the discourse of the master is not discourse is nothing but rhetoric once one has *a priori* decided that the master is the law. The fact that some people think that they imaginarily embody the law does not imply that the law is reducible to that simple mastery. The fact that the tyrant takes possession of the law does not imply that the only law that exists is tyrannical. The law of the master is thus not the law. The role of the political power is necessary only in order to point to the law, whose import is symbolic. This is not unimportant: to play the (angelical) discourse against the law is nothing but to exile oneself from history.

My point, then, is that where it is necessary to think the relation discourse-law of the master, in their terminology, within *a single history*, the authors of *The Angel* call for a *double history*, that of the rebel and that of the master. Since they first showed that the law is always that of the master within our history, the only choice is to change one's historical course, to slant toward a holy and anglic history, a history in truth, the inverted, negative image of the first.

In fact, for Lardreau and Jambet the rebel-philosopher comes into being by the simple fact of being invoked! This is the rebirth of an old imagery, that of the legendary philosopher who here takes on the form of morality, the spiritual forms of Christianity and of cultural revolution. Is this not—30 years later and in another form—the return of a somewhat archaic debate: that of the yogi and the commissar?[14]

The new ivory towers are constructed at a distance from a far too evil history. Nonetheless, the angels who live in them remain convinced that they know the good sense of our history. To free oneself from the political conception of the world is thus to enter into metaphysics, to pass to another knowledge. Everything can be learned, even angelicism. And by the way, the term "angel" should not mislead: the world of angels is one of the most hierarchical societies that there are!

Do we not have here again the belief in a good politics and in a good world once again fascinating these ex-Maoists? That good position which politics didn't give them is now imagined in a lovely fiction which is metaphysical only in name!

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11. Lardreau and Jambet, in *Magazine Littéraire, op.cit.* (Maurice Clavel is the author of a number of recent volumes trying to unite a radical Christianity with a kind of anarchic political, post-May '68 vision. He is also a frequent contributor to the widely circulated weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur.* —Translator's note.)

12. *L'Ange, op.cit.*, p. 33.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

14. On the debate between Koestler and Merleau-Ponty, cf. Claude Lefort, *Un Homme en Trop* (Seuil, 1976), pp. 145-160.

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Variation on the Angel

There is another angel, of whom Walter Benjamin speaks in Chapter 9 of his *Theses on the Philosophy of History*—an angel who doesn't take flight so easily, who doesn't fear his history. "A Klee painting named 'Angelus Novus' shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. The storm is what we call progress."[15]

Benjamin and Klee don't give us the idea of an angelic history: they are concerned to struggle against the falsely paradisiacal history of progress which forgets the past of the vanquished and the dominated of the earth without whom *our history* no longer makes sense.

The Totalitarian Fatality

The success of *The Angel* could be explained in several manners, of which I will deal particularly with two. First, it is a last life insurance policy for an intellectual world in decay. *The Angel* can be read as a true consecration of the intellectual position at the very moment when the crisis of the social representation of knowledge is shaking acquired prestige and situations in the university and outside. What is more, this book is part of a growing current whose common denominator is the radical critique of all state forms. For many former militants—Stalinists or not—the reading of Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag* was decisive: it was no longer possible to chant the refrain of the fiction concerning the Soviet Union. This revelation was a modern earthquake: if Holy Russia has become perverted into totalitarianism, we ourselves have no reason to escape from this. "The Gulag is perhaps in this sense the logic of the left in the West..."[16] The point would be that there is a definitive evil, that of the state. Without a proletariat, it is necessary to reinvent a sense of history: thus, one says that there is a fatal development of the state; we are condemned to a progressive fascistization; our history is the necessary prey of totalitarianism. We too will learn what the Russian proletariat knows daily. But while it is certain that democratic society is never definitively preserved from totalitarian thunder, that so-called democratic states increase their prerogatives in a troubling manner, this does not imply that democracy is progressively condemned, as if what is at issue in democracy was reducible to the simple democratic bourgeois formalism criticized by Marx, as if the critique of the bourgeois state permitted one to drop the question of the state.[17]

In a few years we will have to analyze this abuse of references to the Gulag and what they represent as a refusal to evaluate the political situation specific to Western

15. In "Theses on the Philosophy of History," trans. Harry Zohn, in *Illuminations* (New York, 1968), pp. 257-258. (I have cited from James Schmidt, "Critical Theory and the Sociology of Knowledge: A Reply to Martin Jay," *Telos*, 21 [Fall 1974], p. 177. Schmidt's reading of the import of this passage is worth noting. —Translator's note.)

16. Lardreau and Jambet, *Magazine Littéraire, op.cit.*

17. On democracy, cf. the very dense pages of Claude Lefort in *Un Homme en Trop*, pp. 190-204.

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Europe. For our part, it is here that we want to think and to act; we are neither in Latin America nor in the Soviet Union. It is no more a question of importing a model of the revolution from Latin America than it is to take oneself for a rebel in Kenguir.[18]

This totalitarian fatalism is carried abusively by an entirely new literary production. We see it, for example, in the "Hypotheses concerning the relations of the so-called liberal state and the fascist state" formulated by François Chatelet in the *Elements for an Analysis of Fascism* edited by Macciocchi.[19] Chatelet writes that "The fascist state is a liberal state reduced to its simple essence."[20] This is also the tendency of André Glucksmann in *The Cook and the Man Eater*,[21] even if the author finally remembers certain democratic victories which, however, he transmogrifies into victories of the people over democracy.[22] Jacques Rancière has posed pertinent questions to this book which invites one to take the side of non-power, of permanent resistance: "It is necessary to hold at the same time two positions: that there is never in the last instance another alternative but to obey or to resist power in whatever concerete figure it takes in each circumstance; but also that everywhere struggles take place in the form of power against power, such that there is not a *good* instrument nor an apparatus which would be the good power, the power of the proletarians or of the plebeians; nor is there either an instance of non-power. This is to say that resistance is always divided."[23] Resistance is already a power, the power to shake the yoke of domination. But should one remain at that confrontation of multiple powers? Cannot one more rigorously question what is particularly at issue in the case of political power?

Thus, against the various angels, we see that non-power is certainly not a good position. Although we are convinced that we are always caught up in networks of power, we nonetheless have to question the specificity and the autonomy of the political. Once we have recognized what is historically at stake with the modern state, can we question the role of the state, the question of the political?

II. La Boétie and the Question of Servitude

Running as swiftly as we have through this anti-political or anti-statist literature, one has the sense that it is not enough to list all the bad powers of the earth. By relating every form of power to the totalitarian model, one ends up understanding nothing about the question of the political.

Paul Ricoeur did not avoid this question in a text published more than 20 years ago in *Esprit*.[24] Since political power necessarily points toward a *social universe* as a symbolic point of reference without which there would not be a society, it always risks taking itself for that universal: "this is why the lie slides so easily into the political; the political is inclined toward the lie because the reality of the political terrain is that of

18. "Kenguir"—a camp in the Gulag Archipelago whose rebellion is described in the third volume of Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*. [Translator's note]
19. Paris: October 18, 1976.
20. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 113.
21. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1975.
22. The principle interest of Glucksmann's book lies in an essential question: that of popular cultures, or rather autonomous cultures. Can one imagine places in society that are not political in the traditional sense, i.e., not simply "reflectors" of the state? This is a question that is not foreign to the one posed by Rosanvallon (cf. below): can one liberate and rehabilitate civil society? Simply, as opposed to Glucksmann, can one think of these autonomous grounds in a perspective other than that of resistance to the state?
23. Jacques Rancière, in *Recherches Logiques*, No. 1 (Winter 1975).
24. *Esprit*, May 1957; reprinted in *Histoire et Vérité* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1964), p. 265.

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ideality." Such is the paradox of the political—that the state which symbolizes the social unification imagines that it embodies the common will.

La Boétie, in turn, never stops posing the question of voluntary servitude throughout his admirable political poem. This is the other side of the political enigma. There is the side of Machiavelli: that a prince can deceive his subjects; and the La Boétien side: that the people can let themselves be deceived. The question of the political emerges from that polarity, that double enigma: there is no state save in relation to the society; and there is no civil society without a political society. The question of the political is only the question of their relation. To reduce the question of the political to the simple affair of the state is to condemn onself to blindness concerning the actual movement of the political.

What is interesting in the edition of La Boétie's *Discourse on Voluntary Servitude*[25] edited by Miguel Abensour is its insistence on the profound political signification of that work, which was supposed initially to constitute the kernel, the central chapter of Book I of Montainge's *Essais* before Calvinist partisans took hold of it as a militant arm. The question of servitude cuts across this text's multiple arabesques. "But, good Lord, what then is this? How are we to call this vice, this horrible vice? Is it not shameful to see an infinite number of men not only obey, but crawl; not be governed but be tyrannized; having neither goods nor family nor children nor even their own life which belongs to them?'[26]

La Boétie has no thesis in the sense that he would think of a good people or a good power. One understands him perhaps better by inversion: there would be an obvious risk in perfectly determining the nature of the social: the risk of *legitimating* a new domination. The indetermination of the political signifies that the relation of political society to civil society—itself always articulated by its internal divisions—must always be able to be modified. The question of the political is not different from that of the institution of the social.

The two authors of the preface show admirably how that question is finally covered over by the numerous interpretations of the *Discourse*. We can show this by taking two particularly significant examples, those of Marat and of Lammenais.

In *The Chains of Slavery*[27]—a text whose accent is strangely that of La Boétie—Marat immediately naturalizes the question of the *Discourse*: "The love of domination," he writes, "is natural to the human heart." But this is to forget that the *Discourse* was written in 1548—at least this is the hypothesis of the preface—the year of the great revolt of the Gabelle in Guyana. La Boétie is thus not talking about a subjugated people but of a people in revolt to whom, nonetheless, the question of servitude is posed. This fact makes it necessary to distinguish voluntary servitude from any desire for submission, from any "love of the censor."

Too many recent revolutionary experiences have unhappily proven that many revolts find their "end" in a new form of servitude. Does this simply mean that all revolt is condemned to a new form of servitude, that the rebel (*révolté*) "diabolically" decides to love a new censor? Or does it not rather indicate that the "political" is never

25. Paris: Payot, 1976. There are four moments in this impressive editorial work: (1) a dense presentation by Miguel Abensour and Marcel Gauchet; (2) a first trajectory where the prefaces or texts consecrated to the *Discourse* are published: Lammenais (1835), Pierre Leroux (1847), Auguste Vermorel (1863), Gustav Landauer (1907), Simone Weil (1937); (3) La Boétie's text: the manuscript of Mêsmes and its transcription by Charles Teste; (4) a new reading that is sketched by Pierre Clastres and Claude Lefort.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 176.

27. London, 1774; Paris, 1792.

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definitively played out; that it is a present that must always be begun anew, a history that is an unending risk, and that a revolution can turn back against its actors? The entire sense of La Boétie's question lies in that *difference* which certain people don't want to see: "voluntary servitude" is not synonymous with the desire to submit or the love of the censor; voluntary "servitude" is not the same as resignation or the absence of revolt. "The people revolt and, in a sense, never stop revolting. But the question of servitude is not the same as that of a revolt.... Servitude remains internal to the movement that wants to produce freedom. The true gesture of rupture from which freedom would be born does not take place—this is where the enigma lies."[28]

This is the enigma: that no "general political response" will give the means of avoiding servitude. This means is but the desire of each and of us all. La Boétie's genius is found in this remark, which guides the poem: power does not stand on its own; it's *you* who make it stand; *don't do* anything and the power will fall of its own accord. The political is not the prince or the state in their isolation and their apparatus, but rather it is *the state and you.*

The state alone is nothing but the misappropriation (*détournement*) of the political. The political designates the endless relation of the power and of those in whose *name* it has taken form under the symbolical vision of the law. Political power is thinkable only as a *relation.* To think of it only in terms of the state leads quickly to the objectifying and isolating that state.

Lamennais re-edited the *Discourse* in 1835. Simply that, to the question of *below*—why do we, people from below, revolt in order to fall into a new servitude—he substitutes the question of *above*—how does the tyrant produce servitude. Lamennais forgets that the question was posed with an eye to peasant revolts. The revolts, of course, have an historical sense: it is not a matter of indifference that they break out at the very moment when a new form of state appears, when the society secularizes and organizes itself into its own terms and no longer in terms of an external divinity. This new state is no longer satisfied to remain separate from society: the great peasant revolts appear when the modern state is born, and when the autonomy of society is threatened by a state that tries to infiltrate into the social.

We have been educated to turn our vision toward the *above*, and we can't help thinking the political in terms of the state, even though the political is nothing else but our relation to that state. Thus, it is important to reflect on all the popular revolts, especially on those revolts of the peasantry, whose goal was not the conquest of the state.[29]

In summary: we are in history. We can't get out if it "angelically." There is not an external transcendence, an angelic position from which to see the rest of the world; transcendence—to keep on using this term—is but the always possible pursuit of history, the virtuality of a future to be made, and as its counterpart, the impossibility of conceiving a good state, a good society.

III. The Question of Politics and Sociology

Since the social is not thinkable outside of its divisions and its relations to the political, it is not possible to determine it as a neat object of observation more or less

28. Preface to the *Discourse*, p. xxi.

29. French historians today seem to have recognized this. In Gallimard's "Archives" collection we find: *Croquants et Nu-Pieds*, by Y.-M. Bercé, 1974, whose first chapter is dedicated to the Guyana revolt of 1548; *Les Camisards*, by Philippe Joutard, 1976; *Apocalypse et Révolution au Mexique*, by J. Meyer, 1974.

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well-outlined. To say that there is not a social *object* is to say that society is always open, and that the state is that symbolic place in terms of which society represents and operates its changes. Does this mean that sociology has no place? It's not that simple. One can, of course, examine sociology in order to denounce its scientific pretensions. Further, one notes that the political in sociology is always a second moment which comes in order to organize the first phase of society.[30] From this viewpoint, the Marxist influence is obvious: the political institutionalizes the conflicts that arise elsewhere, i.e., in economic society. The political thus cannot be thought as *instituting* the social; it is but a relay.

If we analyze the recent reflections of Nicos Poulantzas, a Marxist thinker who has been able to confront with an extreme rigor these questions of the state and of the autonomy of the political, we see that after having criticized the instrumentalist and functionalist theories of the state-thing and the state-subject, and after having recognized that the state is only a "relation," he nonetheless fails to see the symbolic nature of the state and thus the sense of this relation. "But the state is a relation: that means...that its relative autonomy and its role in the establishment of the general interest of the bourgeoisie on the hegemony of a fraction (today, monopoly capital), in brief the politics of the state cannot be defined in terms of its own power or to its rationalizing will?"[31] One would multiply in vain the mediations—as Poulantzas does—for the state will never be anything but—"in the last instance"—the speaker for a class. Rather than forming an idea of the political power as one structure among others, as an organ (*instance*) which is distinct but which doesn't play a specific role in relation to the social whole, it seems more important and more urgent to conceive of the political as itself founding the possibility of the existence of the social. There is no imaginable society that would not have a split between itself and a political power.

For Alain Touraine in *La production de la société,* society produces itself. Thus, it is not necessary to conceive of a symbolic place in relation to which the society would unify itself. Henceforth the state and the political institutions only permit the negotiation of the class conflicts that cut through society. The ideal is to have quickly at hand a *good* state machine, a good instrument of administration, and good tensions within society—tensions capable of putting that society into action. All that is necessary is that the two sides of the sociological balance remain in equilibrium without any leaps or useless falls. "Nothing is more troubling for those who have been brought up in the spirit of western liberalism than *this role of the state as the necessary complement of social movements.*"[32] "State and nation are separated and in combat to the extent that the state becomes an ever more essential element of the economic system, and the nation breaks up into particular collectivities, local and regional groups, ethnic collectivities, groups of age and perhaps of sex."[33] Does the

30. "A tradition that permits the conception of the political only by deriving it from a mythical state before politics, or in terms of something other than itself—whether one says that it proceeds from the institutionalization of 'natural' domination of the strong over the weak, from the establishment of a rational consensus among individuals in order to restore the rules and an organ (*instance*) controlling the execution of these rules, or...from the necessity of a second guarantee for a domination that is first of all determined in its form at the level of production..." (M. Gauchet, *Critique*, October 1974, p. 911.) On sociology, cf. "Examen de la sociology," *Encyclopedia Universalis,* by Claude Lefort.

31. N. Poulantzas, in *Dialectiques,* No. 13 (Spring 1976), p. 37. The journal *Dialectiques,* of Marxist orientation but without preoccupations of orthodoxy, regularly devotes articles to the question of the state and the autonomy of the political.

32. Touraine, in *Sociologie du travail,* No. 1, 1975, p. 13. Emphasis added.

33. *Ibid.,* p. 9.

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rehabilitation of civil society and the appearance of these groups imply the loss of sense of the state? Or is it not, on the contrary, the symbolic force of the political society that can permit the liberation of civil society?[34]

The political is not a question for the sociologist. Everything is played out in society. The state is only a supplementary force, called to disappear for some, to play a strictly administrative role for others. Sociology turns away from the problem of the political "representation," from the problem of the relation of the social universal (or law) of state-society.

IV. The Democratic Age

"Left to itself, politics carries a tyranny." (E. Lévinas)

The fact that the political is not identical with the simple form of the state, that it concerns the representation and the social relation, and that it is not determined in relation to a seizure of power does not prevent one from reflecting more immediately on our own political history.

The title of Pierre Rosanvallon's book should not lead one astray: *The Age of Self-Management*[35] is not the least of a series of books concerning a rather badly treated theme. Self-management is not conceived of as an eventual "piece of society"; it is not destined to be one of the stones in the socialist mosaic. Self-management corresponds to a global social project; its historical sense lies in its nature as conclusion of both liberalism and statist socialism. Thus, in the first part of his lively and stimulating book, Rosanvallon introduces us to a real "economy of politics." "The development of political society, the decentralization of certain state prerogatives to local collectivities, the restoring of others to civil society, thus form a coherent movement. This is how self-management goes beyond both classic liberalism and statist socialism."[36] Thus, the socialist self-management project is part of a double movement: a movement of reconstitution and of reinforcement of a civil society which is presently in distress and always ready to give itself over to the state while remaining dangerously silent in front of the extension of the state bureaucracy; and, on the other hand, a movement of reorientation of the tasks and the prerogatives of the state. "The state must return to the civil society what it has not stopped confiscating from it."[37]

These two movements are simultaneous: the one doesn't go without the other. Thus, the question of the political is clarified: the political is not the single property of the state; the political is nothing else than the relation of the political to the civil society. Henceforth, a project of modification of political society will not exist if it does not change civil society.

Rather than relating the political to any other form of power, Rosanvallon examines the particularity of the political power, of a constitutional state (*Rechsstaat*), in order to clarify its relation to civil society. What is at issue in this political wager is the reduction of the state—which does not imply its disappearance—implies the parallel liberation of civil society, which could mean its depoliticization. The political is not

34. This, in the end, is the key question: to recognize that the *necessity* of the state insofar as it points to the law, toward a social symbolic universal need not be incommpatible with the perception of certain socio-cultural terrains as autonomous. Cf. the remarks below concerning Rosanvallon's book.

35. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1976.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

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politics in the traditional sense of the term of struggle for power; civil society must no longer be submitted to the traditional issues of party politics. Consequently, all the problems of a society are not necessarily political problems belonging to the state sphere alone. To free civil society is at the same time to free the aesthetic, the legal, the cultural—all the institutional terrains—from the weight of a too rapid analysis which denies the autonomy of each of these spheres with regard to the state. All this would prove to what degree the age of self-management must become synonymous with the democratic age.

Rosanvallon's book will certainly give rise to a debate within a left which, most of the time, thinks only in terms of the seizure of poewr and thus of the state in terms of the *above*. Its affirmation that all of the political is not played out in the state, that all socialization does not take place in political militancy, that socialist society will never be the good society stripped of conflict, and that the revolution is not the concern only of the revolutionary movement, must have their effect.

This book is nonetheless realistic. The term realism comes back as a *leitmotiv*; and, in fact, a chapter is given over to the question of the "realism of power."[38] The book is programmatically valuable precisely because of its realism and lucidity. His view of the political question permits the author to sketch a new social geography whose sense is to avoid the overlappings of the state and politics. There again, it is our political view that changes course: no longer to think the social terms of the above, in terms of the state; but in terms of civil society, of autonomous terrains.

Of course, self-management is a wager on our future: perhaps we will be strangled by the "fascistization." But we will not invoke the totalitarian fatality: we will have wagered, thought and acted in relation to this wager which is political.

The point should be clear: the more one abusively reduces the political to the question of the state apparatus—whether this be in order to objectify it as the political "terrain" par excellence or in order to resist it indefinitely (which is nothing other than to share the same position vis-à-vis the function of the state)—the less the analysis is political. The question of the political consists in conceiving the relation of the above and the below, of political society and civil society. In this sense, to speak of a necessary depoliticization of civil society does not mean to exile oneself from the political, but rather to think the relations of state and society differently.

No longer to think the political in function of the state: a real Copernican revolution in the political field, which should not spare an intellectual world whose shapely unity we have seen to be quite cracked.

Intellectuals as well as militants—the intellectual militants—always thought of themselves as for the state or against the actual state—which means for the future state. What then will be the role of those intellectuals without a state?[39] Of course, since 1968, there are many who have become apostate concerning their old statist beliefs. But have they not fallen into the opposite error: anti-statism? Our position is more paradoxical: it is because we give to the state its political meaning that we do not need to be its victims or its martyrs. From this viewpoint, Rosanvallon's book allows one to understand the ambiguity of French *gauchism*: if it permitted the recognition

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 67ff.

39. The intellectual no longer has a privileged status, no longer is charged with deciding the meanings. Meaning is the affair of everyone, and not that of a minority, be it of the state or not.

One thus sees perhaps better what bothered us so much in *The Angel*: the a-politicism of the rebel-philosopher is only the mirror of a vanguardist political experience. Will intellectuals ever escape from these false radicalisms?

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of conflictual terrains specific to civil society, it immediately drew them up toward politics in its restrictive sense of the seizure of state power.

A certain vulgate of Foucaultism is a perfect example of anti-statism: One is obsessed indefinitely by the networks of power; one thinks in terms of the marginals against the negativity of the institutions, of resistance against the evil of the state—and one ends up by rendering invalid all institutional or political reflection. From this viewpoint, the article of Deleuze on Foucault[40] is typical of our times. But our point is that only an institutional thought can go together with a democratic perspective.

We should speak, then, only of the end of a *vision of politics* centered on the state as the agent of progress and the liberator of the masses. This is not in the least synonymous with that end of the political of which the technocrats dream! Again, to give a sense to the political is to no longer think of it as an affair of the state, but rather as our relation to the state, as the recognition of the function of the state and as our desire to neutralize the statist madness.

40. In *Critique,* No. 343, December 1975.

ESPRIT

by Dick Howard

As the new director of *Esprit*, Paul Thibaud finds himself in an enviable, yet difficult and complex situation. Nearly half a century's tradition is a mixed blessing. The journal can call on contributors whose horizons extend beyond the tenacles of Paris, to the provinces, Europe and the Third World. Its reputation assures it a far-flung readership and influence as well. Tradition can, of course, easily become habit and govern expectations: that is the danger that Jean-Marie Domenach successfully confronted when he took over the directorship from Albert Benuin in 1957; and it is now Thibaud's problem in different social and political conditions. But the particular tradition of *Esprit* is a help here. From its foundation in 1932, *Esprit* has been socially and politically engaged against what it calls the "established disorder." Anchored in the French Catholic milieu—although many of its important contributions have been non-Catholic and non-religious—the journal has remained unique among Parisian intellectual reviews because of its attachment to ongoing struggles throughout France due to its national implantation, which gives it a movement character.[1]

But increasing secularization may be drying the springs from which *Esprit* drew so

1. Several years ago, at a *Telos* conference in Buffalo, André Gorz was asked to represent *Les Temps Modernes* on a panel discussing the role of left journals. He justified his refusal by remarking that *Les Temps Modernes* was no longer a radical journal but rather an institution! While the remark is somewhat anachronistic at present, since the editorial board of *Les Temps Modernes* has been joined by a number of younger, more activist "veterens" of the post-May realignments and rethinkings—such as Claire Etcherelli, Francois George, Pierre Goldman, Pierre Rigoulot and Pierre Victor—it is still the case that one does not go to that journal to get an understanding of the ongoing social and political dynamic of contemporary France. Whether *Les Temps Modernes* will disappear with Sartre and de Beauvoir, as Gorz thought then, or whether it has taken a new lease on life remains to be seen. For the present, I think, Gorz's judgment still holds: because of its manner of functioning, which is not independent of its lack of a social and political base, as well as the weight of its past, *Les Temps Modernes'* only tradition is an "existential" lack of roots that will no doubt condemn it.

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much and so many of value. Further, May '68 transformed the coordinates within which radical-critical activity can take place. *Esprit* is at an organizational and intellectual turning point. By looking at how it got there, and what it wants to do, I hope to show that we should, however we can, help *Esprit* to turn the corner. I want to argue that what one gets from the pages of *Esprit* is not so much an understanding of French (or Parisian) intellectuals as it is an image of France: its hopes, fears, possibilities and illusions.[2] The reason for this lies in a specific attitude or methodology, which *Esprit* has developed from its radical Christian political engagement—although one may come to this stance today by a different path.

Before turning to the historical and theoretical antecedents of *Esprit*, a specific and unique aspect of its content, present from the outset and continuing, which points to its movement character, should be mentioned. Many readers turn first to the 20-30 page section of every issue called the "Journal à plusieurs voix." On double-columned pages, one finds short essays—factual, ironic, engaged or simply points of information. The brief, pointed essay is rooted in a conversational genre that often works by counterpoint. In this case, the "many voices" that constitute this section have actually spoken much of what we read. There is a weekly meeting at the office of *Esprit*, attended by 10 to 15 regulars and varying numbers of passers-through Paris (foreign and French). One talks informally about what is going on, what one things is important, what is bothersome or promising for the future. Here, being in Paris helps. There are visitors from all corners of the world, friends of the review or travellers returning. New ideas are brought, experiences confronted and deepened. At times, the discussion could be imaged as that of a 19th-century "salon," with all its *préciosité*; at others, it is more like editorial meetings deciding the week's assignments; at still others, a political group elaborating strategy and evaluating its activities. Crucial is the feeling of collegiality and the sharing of an attempt to reveal the originality and yet typicality of the *event*. It was Merleau-Ponty, himself a member of an *Esprit* support group before the war, who wrote that "there is often more truth in a small event (*fait divers*) than in a philosophical tome." This could serve as the motto of the "Journal à plusieurs voix," with the addendum that this style of writing engages the reader as participant in a way that edifying or scientific prose can never approach. This engaged style of intellectual work, and the stress on the event, are constant features of *Esprit's* engagement.

This stylistic feature explains, in part, how *Esprit* has been able to retain its personality while following and remaining engaged in a rapidly transformed social and political half-century. If, as good intellectuals, we ask after the theoretical premise underlying this attitude, we find it in the specific Christianity which Mounier elaborated as the theory of "personalism." Mounier's theoretical writings would need a separate essay; and I confess to finding those that I have read far less interesting than the action that is *Esprit*. Mounier's predecessor, in theory and in practice, was Péguy. In both cases, Christianity becomes a faith and action built on the paradox of the *Incarnation*. We secularized moderns might find it easier to think this paradox with

2. This is not to say that the journal is solely national, nor anti-intellectual. It does take up the issues raised by the intellectuals, in the world of theory, culture and politics. And it is continually concerned with the ongoing world situation. "Parochial" would be the last term one would think of applying to *Esprit*, as the list of special sections and issues indicates. My point is that when foreigners read it, they get a sense not just of a common intellectual project, or a similar political project; they also come to feel and understand the specificity of the French context.

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Heidegger's notions of the finitude of *Dasein* and its consequences; or to elaborate its political implications with Hannah Arendt and the theory of the Republic. For the person of faith, Christ incarnate is witness to the necessary tension of being human, which is the tension that we too experience as political actors: the polarity of witness and efficacity, of dirty hands. The tension is not one of good vs. evil, spirit vs. the flesh (as it might be for the Manichaeans or even for Augustine). It arises in the Incarnation because flesh cannot be abstracted from the spirit; flesh and spirit are not mutually exclusive, they abide in One. The moral is clear: the material (or the political) is not in principle evil, for as part of God's creation it is purposeful and potentially, but never actually, the embodiment of the holy. Faith in the Incarnation thus makes problematic rendering to Caesar, just as it does blind obedience to the established Church. There is and can be no "good society" on finite Earth, where purity is impossible; and yet the task is to work for its advent. The intellectual aspect of this is very close to what the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty aimed at: neither a rationalism-spiritualism, nor an empiricism-scientism is adequate to prevent the event (or advent) in its singularity. Seeking to preserve this singularity leads to the anti-bureaucratic, anti-exploitative politics that we shall see emerge over the years of *Esprit's* development.

From the outset, *Esprit* was searching for a "third way" to combat the "money society" that it called and calls the "established disorder." The Church hierarchy in France had demonstrated its complicity with disorder at the end of the 19th century, in the struggle against lay schooling, and in the Dreyfus affair. For Mounier and his group, this complicity is not inherent in Christianity; and one side of the journal's task was defined as wresting free the spiritual from its institutioanl form. That did not mean, however, returning to a pure spiritualism, for the purity of spiritualism could only lead to the implicit complicity of a pure consciousness that closes its eyes to the evils of the material world in which it is nonetheless embodied. *Esprit's* engagement in the socio-cultural and politcial events of the times did not reject the spiritual in favor of efficacity, however, as Nizan's option for the Communist Party was urging so many at the time. Nor could the choice be that of the "progressive Christian," who separated worldly and spiritual activity; for that is another manner of denying the message of the Incarnation. Mounier's paradoxical task demanded the maintenance of both poles: spiritual witness with a continual concern for efficacity. When *Esprit* was founded in 1932, Mounier's first struggle, against his friend Déléage, was to insure that *Esprit* remain a journal, a place of reflection and communication, and not a political movement *per se*. Only in this way, he thought, could the spiritual have the necessary practical influence without wholly immersing itself in practicality.

If one were to trace the history of *Esprit's* political choices, treating the journal-movement as if it were an organized political formation, one would be as often disappointed by its naiveté as one would be excited by its prescience.[3] In the prewar

3. Michel Winock's *Histoire politique de la revue Esprit*, 1930-1950 (Paris, 1975), on which I rely for much of the following, is more than just that kind of chronicle. On the other hand, it is less than an analysis, since it explicitly neglects the socio-cultural reflection which occupied much of the journal's space. A well-schooled historian, who has used unpublished materials and interviews with many of the participants, Wincock seems to me to have cut short the range of his work by not asking the more "pedagogical" question: how could such a journal-movement survive; why did it maintain its influence; and what are the implications of its basic stance for us today? These, of course, are my questions—but without Wincock's excellent work, and occasional observations on this score, I could not ask them so clearly. Wincock's tendency is to point frequently to the tension between witness and efficacity, to indicate that an engaged

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period, *Esprit* developed some important insights. The rejection of the secular complicity of the church implied first and foremost that the movement *Esprit* could not claim, any more than could the church, to hold the truth of economic and political life. Our own "church" cannot come with its "good" doctrines to replace the corrupt one. (This is a lesson that continually aided *Esprit* in its relations with the Communist party, and in its analysis of the "socialist" experiments elsewhere. From the outset, a critique of totalitarian pretensions was a part of *Esprit's* basic attitudes.) On the other side, however, it is not simply the church that is responsible for the established disorder; and thus, the attack on liberal individualism and economic exploitation cannot be limited to a demand for formal equality and material well-being, but must entail the creation of a reconstituted community (and not the return to a glorious, romanticized, past). While aspects of the Russian experience were tempting, it had to be rejected not only for its crude materialistic philosophy, but also because putting off the happy future for a present of sacrifice was not consistent with Mounier's personalist Christianity. But not all conclusions could be drawn from theory alone. Although he was friendly with Victor Serve, Mounier could only partly share his analysis of the Russian experience at this time. And although *Esprit* published E. Borne's attack under the title "Stakhanovism and the working person" in March 1936, it was not until the love-hate collaboration with the French Communist Party after the liberation, and the struggles for decolonization, that a clear view of Marxism in theory and in practice began to emerge. Condemning the Moscow purges, Mounier refused to equate Stalinism with Marxism (even though, like so many of his generation, including Sartre, his knowledge of Marx's texts was vague). Although in the early 1940s, N. Berdaieff wrote several essays on Russia for the journal, no reckoning was drawn—leaving the way open for a period of "philo-communism" during and after the Resistance. A final aspect of *Esprit's* prewar politics was the sharp rejection of liberalism at the time of the Popular Front, and especially with its refusal to aid the Spanish Republicans. Liberalism's theoretical respect for the free individual was again and again shown in practice to be a sham, an atomism of the means with no view of the (spiritual) end.

The negative process by which *Esprit* set about defining its own position gave rise, in fact, to little substance from the viewpoint of social or political theory. Mounier was tempted by the approach of de Man's *The Socialist Idea*, which tried to go beyond the sterile dilemma of reformism vs. revolution by integrating the rising middle classes and stressing the role of governmental fiscal policies in establishing an almost medieval notion of the just price and the just wage. But *Esprit's* anti-romantic and anti-parliamentary stance and Proudhonist sympathies made the group suspicious of the statism and spiritual idealism in this program. *Esprit's* anti-bourgeois and anti-materialist attitude opened it up toward the new phenomena with which de Man was concerned; but its voluntarism forbade any structured politics. For example, an issue of June 1936 was devoted to women, who were characterized as "a spiritual proletariat... who have remained outside history." Nothing seems to have come of this, however, for it was the movement, not the goal's realization, that was vital. Work groups were established throughout France (and, to a degree, abroad: *Esprit* was subtitled "International Journal, French edition"). To avoid attracting authors only in search of personal

spiritualism entails an ambiguity between short term and long term goals, and to suggest that it was, somehow, the genius of Mounier's person that bridged the gap. By taking his history beyond 1950, and posing what must be Thibaud's and our own question, I hope to show that there is something more involved.

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glory, all were to take part in the menial tasks as well. Politically, despite its generally pacifist sympathies, *Esprit* was among the few publications that took a public stance against the Munich Accords. Yet, with the war, the defeat and establishment of the Vichy regime, *Esprit* remained more a movement and an attitude than a theory or a party.

The *Esprit* group's role during the Resistance is only of peripheral interest in our context. Winock's history provides ample detail for those interested; and it shows, as one might expect, the kind of distortions and quarrels to which, with the Cold War, its role was subjected. More important is that, with the liberation, *Esprit* devoted increasing stress to political matters, and adopted what Wincock calls a "philo-communist" attitude. Sympathy with the communists was rooted not so much in an abstract anti-capitalism or a theoretical convergence of views as it was in the *experienced fact* of the fraternal and sacrificing *community* established during the Resistance. This was the spiritual side, a unity of the idea of socialism and the real efficacity of struggle. The other side was more political. The personalist philosophy had to be de-purified; the temptation to absolutization to be avoided. Thus, Mounier polemicized against Camus and *Combat* for their purism; and Domenach supported the need for a "political justice." Without consciously sacrificing its original attitude, *Esprit* could assert, from the pen of Jean Lacroix, that "we will not make our revolution without..." the communists, since this trust in the communists was based on an ethical admiration for their solid activity as a determined minority held together by its communal faith.

Esprit's period of philo-communism did not pretend to justify itself with reference to Marxian theory. It was an *activity of bearing witness* that tempted them, for it fit their own self-image. To this was added, of course, a visceral rejection of the "American way of life," which seemed to embody all the evils of atomized individualism and the domination of money over any collective values. And, finally, in this early phase, there was the communist support of de-colonization. This political attitude, paradoxically, made it easier for the *Esprit* group to move away from its supportive stance when the wave of purges and then revolts broke out in Eastern Europe.[4] Still, although Mounier had called in February 1947 for the creation of that "socialism with a human face" that became a living slogan 20 years later in Czechoslovakia, the Cold War and its intrigues, which established a false but psychologically real friend-or-foe community, made the break difficult and painful.

Esprit's period of philo-communism enjoined it to return to Marx's own texts. *Esprit* played an important role in that Catholic rediscovery of the humanist young Marx—not stigmatized by Louis Althusser as the root of all deviations! A special issue was devoted to the theme "Open Marxism vs. Scholastic Marxism," in which such communists as C. Roy, Remo Cantoni, Georges Mounin, Marcel Prenant, Maurice Caveing and Jean Momarchi wrote alongside Jean Beaufret, Walter Dircks, Father Chenu, Christopher Hill, Francis Jeanson, Henri Desroches, M. Collinet and Jean Lacroix. In his summary article, speaking for *Esprit*, Lacroix attempted to draw together Proudhon and Marx, each correcting and complementing the other. However theoretical this debate may appear in retrospect, it was its political side that

4. One might compare *Esprit's* situation with that described by Dominique Desanti in *The Stalinists*. Once a philosophy of history is added to that personal experience of community, the rupture becomes the more tortuous, the circumlocutions and rationalizations become necessary defense mechanisms, and one becomes truly a Stalinist, the member of a counter-Church with its own iron-clad orthodoxy.

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outweighed whatever theoretical contribution to a "science of revolution" might have emerged.

Esprit's basic theoretical or personalist stance seemed at the time to prohibit an elaborate, structural theory of revolution. In Christian terms, it had to maintain at once the poles of transcendence and of incarnation; in intellectual terms, it could neither give itself entirely to the play of material forces, nor fly above them at the level of theory. For a time, this tension led to a kind of Lukácsian theory of the proletariat as the revolutionary subject-object of history. Winock describes this attitude toward "the proletarians: new barbarians to be baptized, and new chance for Christianity." Later, he cites a letter from a participant, F. Goguel, who describes a "mystique of the proletariat" that seemed to inspire the journal at this time. It was, of course, at this same period that the worker-priest movement began to take root in France.

While the temptation and mystification of the proletariat is obvious, what is important is that *Esprit* did not succumb. The constitutive tension of Mounier's personalist Christianity of the Incarnation was as opposed to absolutizing the temporal as it was to separating the absolute from the temporal. One can no more judge the real in terms of the ideal than one can understand the real apart from the ideal. Mounier continually rejected attempts by "progressives" to justify their political strategy by reference to the Absolute; and just as strongly opposed those who would suggest that this meant that the means can be justified without reference to that Absolute. While this may sound like a truism, the history of *Esprit's* political engagement demonstrates again and again that only in this manner can one let the *event* appear in all its originality. Only when one sees this originality of the event can one respond to it intelligently and humanly. The need to preserve the priority of the event implies a politics deeply rooted in anti-bureaucratism since the bureaucrat is defined precisely by a subsumptive mentality that excludes the presence of the originality of the event. Intellectually, it implies a rejection of both rationalism and empiricism, a stance akin to that of phenomenology.

The years that followed Mounier's sudden death in 1950 were marked by a basic fidelity to the attitude that had been worked out across two decades of engagement. Precisely for that reason, there ensued a series of gradual changes as the Fourth Republic staggered along, the Third World entered the world stage, and Stalinism's barbarity was revealed by its own proletariat. Under the directorship of Albert Beguin, *Esprit* continued its work, maintaining itself as a place of reflection and a movement open to the event. When Beguin suddenly died in 1957, a "new series" was inaugurated under the direction of Jean-Marie Domenach, who had joined Mounier during the Resistance and had worked with the journal since the Liberation. The editorial that began the "new series" started with the significant assertion that where Beguin's task had been to continue, without pretending to replace the work inaugurated by Mounier, now there was the need for more than continuation. A new generation, born of the Resistance and liberation, was taking over; its task was to stand on its own feet.

Domenach's essay, "Esprit, New Series,"[5] tried to define the direction that he wanted to give the journal. He began with the differences between his situation and that of Mounier in 1932. Most important was that the innocence of Mounier's generation was no longer possible: it had been lost in the Resistance and the struggles

5. Published in *Esprit*, 25e année, No. 255, novembre, 1957, pp. 468-484. (Citations in the following paragraph are from this article.)

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that followed it. 1956 showed the failure of communism in all its nakedness; the new wave of resistance seemed to be centering around the anti-colonial struggles. The failure of past actions and ideals called for a more serious labor of reflection, an end to facile syntheses. Domenach recognized the specificity of personalism, and the chief problem it had not yet resolved: "As opposed to Marxism, personalism doesn't carry with it its sociology." This need for sociological concretion, to which *Esprit* would devote much of its energy, did not mean, however, that the analytic intellect was stressed at the expense of the spirit. Sociology cannot be practiced at the sacrifice of the person. Thus, while Domenach saw Lukács' reading of the proletariat as correct, emerging from it is a kind of revenge of Hegel and the 19th century: the individual is replaced by a collective form. Not only does the idea of the vocation of the proletariat to be the "consciousness of society" pose theoretical problems; the attitude of the French proletariat toward the struggle in Algeria indicated that the proletariat does not in fact function as the theory said that it should. More, if one part of society is said to represent the totality of society, this eliminates the rest, and poses a dangerous basis for a totalitarianism. Rejecting the idea of a universal, revolutionary class, Domenach observed that "in the society of comfort itself, new proletarians emerge as the organization becomes the more perfect: those who are ignored, rejected, unintegrated —physically or mentally ill, the aged, inmates of asylums and hospitals, lost children and young delinquents..." He goes on to point to the changed nature and role of labor, and to insist that intellectual labor too is affected by this change. A collective elaboration is necessary; and such a collective project reaffirms the old idea that if the truth is to be known, the person knowing it must be worthy as well. For this reason, *Esprit's* movement-character is seen as still vital.

The concluding section of Domenach's article is titled "Reformists, Revolutionaries or Franciscans?" It seeks to reaffirm, in the changed conditions, the project begun by Mounier. The term reformist has become vague as neo-capitalism has made socialism an ever-less direct antithesis. The charge of reformism is important only insofar as it forces socialists to make more clear and precise their understanding of the content and the means of achieving socialism. Furthermore, as neo-capitalism transforms the old structures, the question of power comes to take precedence over that of property. Revolution, therefore, concerns "control, administration...education at least as much as political overthrow." The "Franciscan" element is maintained in order to retain the constitutive tension of the Christian project. Domenach writes of it in terms of "an easy friendship with nature, with machines; a manner of playing with things rather than appropriating them." All of this, finally, returns to the central theme: "It is necessary to describe the event in its novelty." Any other approach—Marxism on the one side, bureaucracy on the other—dissolves the event, and with it, the human personality.

Domenach remained director of *Esprit* for 21 years. He maintained the breadth and depth of its concerns, opening up to new directions in the analysis of social and political tendencies as well as to cultural change. It was during this period that the nature and role of the French intellectual began to change. Where the traditional intellectual was a literary person who took a political stance from the standpoint of the moral universal, the 1960s saw the emergence of the social (or human) scientist. *Esprit* tried to keep abreast of these new developments, with special issues, interviews, and round-table discussions. A central figure in this aspect of the journal's work was Paul Ricoeur. At the same time, in keeping with his goal of developing a personalist sociology, Domenach opened the journal to sociologists like Alain Touraine, Michel

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Crozier, Serge Mallet and Daniel Mothé. Sectoral analyses were published, and issues devoted to specific problems. Some of the ideas of '68 were anticipated, for example, by the younger Michel Crozier's 1957 analysis of participation, or Serge Mallet's new working class perspective, or Daniel Mothé's sociology of work.

1968 was a halfway point, and perhaps a turning point, in the directorship of Domenach. It took *Esprit*, like everyone else, by surprise. That generation that Domenach had wanted to stand on its own feet may have grown a bit too comfortable; and its ties with the Gaullists, many of whom, like Edmond Michelet, were compagnons from the Resistance, may have been a bit too close. Nonetheless, after a period of hesitation, *Esprit's* basic attitude before the event stood up; *Esprit* made the turn. The years of disarray of the Left that followed and which reached their heights and depths with the unity and rupture of the Common Program, posed new problems. Many of these are described by the new director, Paul Thibaud, in the text that follows. Thibaud is not of the generation of May in a genealogical sense; he had begun writing for the journal while Beguin was still director, and was its general editor under Domenach (while being formed, as well, through co-editorship of the clandestine *Verité-Liberté* during the Algerian struggle). There is thus a continuity of the *Esprit* tradition, coupled with an opening to the post-May generation. Domenach felt the need to broaden his own work, after more than 30 years with *Esprit's* day-to-day activities; and we can look forward to his individual contribution. With Thibaud, we can hope for that famous "change in continuity."

Thus far, under Thibaud, the rubrics into which the journal's contents are divided have remained similar: major articles, the "Journal à plusiers voix," a series of shorter essays called "Chroniques," and a book review section (which seems a bit less 'literary' than in the past, although literature is still the dominant subject). A "review of reviews" section has been added as an occasional feature, to focus on either a special issue of a journal (*Les Temps Modernes* on the Mahgreb) or on a new journal (*Libre*), or for the future on an important foreign journal. Many of the old authors are still present, but new ones have begun to appear. The ecumenical aspect remains, as do the contacts with the provinces, on which more stress is being placed through attempts to hold public meetings and discussions involving *Esprit's* editors and collaborators. (Some of these, as in Paris, too, are held jointly with other journals, *Silex* in Grenoble, for example, or *Libre* and *Faire* in Paris.) The "Internal Bulletin" has reappeared regularly, reporting activities, printing projects still in elaboration, and serving to bring in new followers (its existence is announced in the journal; it can be ordered at a cost of 5 francs). Regular work groups are meeting in the areas of philosophy, culture, politics and history; and summaries of their meetings appear in the Internal Bulletin. All of this appears to be a return to the journal-movement approach of Mounier; and some of it had begun again already at the end of Domenach's directorship. Finally, for those who may have known *Esprit* at one or another period, a change in format should be noted: From the severe tome of the past has emerged a multicolored, illustrated series of covers; inside too one finds some illustrations, and even a cartoon or two, as well as a bolder typeface and less demanding visual presentation with more editorial subtitles. This is, of course, a concession to the market, since the growing numbers of French journals are competing on the same newsstands as before, and *Esprit* is attempting to gain a new audience as its old one from the days of Mounier increasingly passes away.

More difficult to evaluate is the changed intellectual thrust of the new direction. To read *Esprit* regularly remains an education, with coverage ranging from foreign and

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domestic politics across the arts and sciences (including poetry and translation) to the minor fact. If there is a change here, it seems to me to lie in the increasingly self-critical stance which reflects *Esprit's* own self-questioning. It is important to note that this self-questioning is not the same as that which has recently overcome so many French intellectuals in the wake of the *Gulag*: it is not the breast-beating and abstract negation of an earlier position that thought that it had the key to the world and world history, and which now sinks into a nihilism hidden within a rhetoric of revolt. Mounier's engaged personalist Christianity saved his successors from this extreme of French intellectual self-abnegation, as we saw. It is for this reason that *Esprit* has found itself publishing essays by Castoriadis, Lefort, Gauchet and those editing the new journal *Libre*, as well as analyses from self-management theorists like Rosanvallon. The critique of totalitarianism undertaken by *Esprit* had begun already in 1932, when Mounier realized that the criticism of the established Church meant that one could not, in turn, establish a new church. This attitude has continued in recent issues: in Cadard and Chen Ying-Hsiang's presentation of the power struggles in China, Lavau's analysis of the historiographical distortions by the French Communist Party and in a series of essays on religious sects, as well as through the publication of documents on Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Hungarian minority in Transylvania. Or, on a more "engaged" level, this has taken the form of analyses of the ecology movement (Mongin), the problems within the French left (Julliard, Thibaud, Castoriadis and Rosanvallon), and a series of hefty criticisms of the knee-jerk leftism that appeared in France at the time of the suicides of the Baader-Meinhof group in Germany.

A key to *Esprit's* changed stance is the new subtitle of the journal: "Change Culture and Politics."[6] The guiding idea seems to be that we must conceive of politics as a form of culture. In a sense, this is a logical development of the early stress on the event in its

6. The following text appears on the first page of each issue: "The totalitarian imposture has finally exploded. And now, it is as if our world had lost its future: the decomposition of capitalist societies no longer announces anything. This truth leads to disarray: for us, it is an opening, the occasion to invent something else.

"First of all: to renew critique. And, when we denounce capitalist speculation and deception, no longer to have as our horizon that good society where the professionals of well-being would have free play. To stop protesting against exploitation in order better to forget domination.

"The rich and the powerful don't only exploit the poor; they prevent them from living. If exploitation has power over its victims, it is because autonomous modes of life are destroyed. In a society that is atomized (*défaite*), large commercial, cultural and political organizations propose or impose a product, a service, an obligation for each aspect of life. Thus, the people becomes a public; the resident, a user; the citizen, a consumer; the worker, a tool.

"The false technical rationalization fails in the details; each of its operations fails to reach their goal. Productivist activism only knows how to put off its failure. Revolts break out on the margins, but this system in which we no longer believe still determines behaviors and demands. By reflection, by experimentation, we must find an alternative to it. We don't believe in a society 'without contradictions' and without a State, but in a society of diversity and conflicts where the capacities of analysis, management and critique which the organizers and clerics have taken over are returned to the common life.

"The transformation that we want in culture, politics and religion presupposes that intellectuals change their way of working; that they walk in the world without blinkers and without catechisms; that they get rid of their clericalism, their concern with themselves, and no longer consider themselves as the vanguard of a good power, as those who determine the sense of life.

"To recognize the limits of reason, the force and the value of conflicts; to combat the separation of experience and competence—this is to give a body to this simple proposition: democracy is a future."

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originality. The difference appears first of all insofar as the analysis of the event seems to take a less party-like or tactical orientation than it did in the past. The idea of a "logic of emancipation" and the notion of self-management in all spheres implies that one focus on those activities that, at one or another cultural level, are seeking to restore the dimension of community. The guiding idea here is that the "logic of emancipation" cannot be the result of abstarct analysis. The events that *Esprit* analyses are seen as social experiments. Their originality lies first of all in their democratic character. Democracy is not conceived of as a method through which social harmony and unanimity can be achieved. The goal is not to create (or to see created) a society without contradictions. Rather, democracy is liberating in the sense that it is an arrangement that permits and demands difference; the democratic community is a community of persons who are constantly in a position to redefine their relation to the collective.

The "Working Program" published in No. 4 of the Internal Bulletin, which follows, shows the direction this questioning takes as a systematic program. Recent articles in the journal illustrate the idea as well. Jeanne Favret-Saada's ethnography of the nature of French peasant beliefs in sorcery, the long discussion and debate concerning the innovative community mental health practices in the small mining town of Moncea-les-Mines, the discussion of the Canadian firm Tricofil as a new "LIP," or the analysis of the failure of technocracy in the Aquitaine region—to mention only these—are illustrative. To these are joined more historical and theoretical presentations, such as Philippe Ariès' essay on family and the cities, the structures of scientific practice today, or Louis Dumont's remarkable historical-ethnographic essay on the birth of the modern conception of the individual. Nor is Marx neglected, as indicated by Hyppolite Simon's attempt to draw from Marx's confrontation with Hegel a "logic of emancipation" separate from the political state.

To conceive of politics as a form of culture does not, of course, mean that the activity of the established state and political parties are to be simply neglected. In addition to the analysis in the "Working Program," the essay by Olivier Mongin in this issue of *Telos* points to the kind of understanding of the relation of the state (or politics) and civil society that is typical of *Esprit's* approach. Political questions, in the narrow sense, are not neglected, nor can they be. Obviously, foreign affairs, the question of nuclear dissuasion, the Third World, Middle East, Horn of Africa, Southeast Asia, etc., are presented and analyzed, as are actual events in France. For, once again, it must be stressed that *Esprit* is a general journal, a French journal—and not an organ of pure theory. For the same reason, the journal still publishes poetry (and a special segment in January 1978 on the "Crisis of Poetry"), short stories and literary analysis. The stress on the different, which is necessary for a functioning democracy, does not imply that one can simply neglect the common dstablished disorder we all live.

Thibaud's task on assuming the directorship is thus a triple one, as I see it. First, to retain the movement-character of the journal, letting neither its practical activities nor its nature as a place of reflection take precedence. Second, as Domenach had already suggested in 1957, to continue to provide the sociology of personalism, and to do so through the continued stress on the originality of the event. Third, to maintain *Esprit's* role as an actual, immediate political voice in French culture and political life. As I said at the outset, I think this effort merits our support. We foreign readers of *Esprit* will find in it not only a general education, not only information or a sense of French cultural-political life. We find too a theoretical reflection seeking to come to

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grips with problems that we share with the authors, and attacking them from a perspective similar to our own. And we find the attempt to make this reflection concrete through the presentation of actual, ongoing social and cultural developments. In short, we can learn from this journal.

WORKING PROGRAM OF *ESPRIT*

by Paul Thibaud

I. *We are all on the frontier*

For our contemporaries, daily life is no longer the peaceful world of small concerns and minor questions. Everything becomes a problem when one can no longer explain the sense of life by reference to great ideological institutions (for example, the republican system of education) or great religious institutions. This is why it is more and more difficult to separate "intellectuals" who, alone, would have the capacity to put into question the foundations, from the "others" who would simply take the world as it comes. All live in the same universe, crossed by radical questions that are posed the moment one undertakes the least action—be it as an educator, doctor, parent or activist. Everyone is henceforth on the frontier, with the same questions, at once concrete and vast. Can the past be anything but anecdotes and absurdities for a humanity that has understood that it gives itself its own rules and its own goals? Don't freedom and our legacy stand opposed? Doesn't the end of the authorities (religious or quasi-religious) which stand above humanity prevent a certain communication among diverse experiences? Has not humanity, outside of material constraints, become a cloud of particles? Must one reject, or rather limit, the universal which technology represents, and which has devastating effects? In the name of what is this possible?

One can say that this sort of reflection, engaged in the epoch in which we live and which is the concern of the journal, follows actual events, but in a sense and following a rhythm that is neither that of the spectacular, nor that of the decisions made by the powers that be. The actuality with which we are concerned is the events which trouble us, the events which force us to be different in the eyes of others as well as in our own.

The concern of a journal is neither all-out curiosity, nor is it just to follow intellectual production: it is to be there where ideas embody themselves, to note their relations with political programs, personal convictions and social practices. It is not to judge ideas in relation to an evolution of society whose sense one knows in advance. Nor is it to suggest that it is enough to change people's view of the world in order that everything else follow. Rather, it is because there are choices to be made, changes to be brought into being; and because these concern at the same time society and culture. For example, the bureaucratic management directed by the modern state has deep, complex and reciprocal relations with the scientific practices that are at present dominant: the belief in the automatic efficacity of specialization, the confidence in an activity that approaches its goal by accumulating partial results—these are at once the ideas of science and of the administration. It is through these ideas that bureaucrats use the prestige of science to justify their manner of acting.

Thus, one sees the effort to be undertaken: to put into relation what are taken to be different domains; to direct attention to the obscure point, the point of unease; to uncover the moment where science undergoes and swallows the social constraints, becoming a myth behind which politicians hide their choices.

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Another example: Our super-integrated universe is crossed by anarchist or bucolic dreams. It is easy to talk about leaving to find refuge in the "margins," far from the state and the organizational society. But these are reactions that are more significant than they are efficacious; they don't understand why modern society is so impoverished when it confronts the world of the state and of money, why one can always only choose between being integrated or organized into one of these two worlds. A reflection on the whole is necessary if one wants what one says, and what is said, about the revitalization of society, a new role for associations and social experiments, or a remaking of conviviality to be more than a consolation. This must be a critical reflection on the *image of politics* (*la représentation politique*) which tends always to project the possibilities of action and the responsibility for change to a source above society. This must be a positive reflection on the manner in which a living *culture* could be reborn. It must aid people to situate themselves without forgetting and without nostalgia in relation to the past so that they can take part in daily life and become creative by breaking their isolation. It must also be a positive reflection on a law that would not be the monopoly of the state, but which would, through debate and conflict, be a collective elaboration, a supple manner of recognizing differences and norms.

The reflection on the whole in a society that is searching for its own sense, a society at work, cannot be the privilege of any clergy. This is why we are offering our readers an association in an enterprise that concerns us all in common and whose stake is to give us each a manner of living our times as conscious actors instead of leaving to the powers that be the monopoly of articulating the relation between knowledge and life. The goal is not to construct a niche above society where theory and the good principles can rest. The goal is to question society and to change people's attitudes (*esprits*) in the course of a reflection on society as it is lived and as it changes.

II. *Is modern society reducible to power and money?*

For two centuries, the history of European nations, especially the Catholic ones, has taken place between two poles: tradition and progress, the church and the school. The sense of the struggle was clear: to escape from provincialism, ignorance and obscurity into the universality of technology and reason. That struggle is now over: universal secular education has been achieved, the peasantry hardly exists any longer, hygiene and medicine have won and, for the most part, the Catholic Church has adopted modern values.

But, at the moment of its triumph, modernity has entered into a spectacular crisis. Everyone sees that if we want to avoid a social, economic and ecological catastrophe, technical progress must be given a goal: progress for what, and under what conditions? We see now that progress and tradition formed a couple where each element depended on the other. Because nations, villages and social groups had a strong identity, the program of rationalization, secularization, rupture of isolation and the imposition of common juridical principles made sense. In an individualistic world, on the other hand, in a scattered society, the process of universalization operates in a void; progress becomes a mechanism without controls, a new servitude. This is the source of the present political crisis.

(1) The idea of *revolution* has ended up by becoming dependent on the idea of progress. The idea of progress, pushed to its limit, becomes the development of the productive power, which becomes the goal at which modern societies aimed. By wanting to give an unchallengeable foundation to the idea of revolution, one has per-

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verted that idea. Instead of signifying the beginning of history and the activation of society, it has come to signify those monstrous attempts to end history and smother society.

(2) The *state*, which had been the promoter of progress and the liberator of the individual from traditional society, has gradually changed its role. It was the bearer of common rules, the agent of communication and the breaking of isolation. It has gradually become the manager and promoter of social existence. Thanks to its functionaries, it has gradually replaced the failing family, the neighborhood and church. It takes care of nearly everything: security and happiness, childhood and old age; it overlooks health and education, conceives entire cities, worries about how a young couple and the aged should live. A state that acted on a resisting but consistent society has become a state that produces social relations through its networks of supervision, assistance and animation. This program is condemned to fail—and yet the modern state seems condemned to continually put it back onto the loom, to refine its impossible project of artificially creating life.

(3) The failure of revolution and progress to serve as positive points of reference has the effect of making language more modest. Henceforth, one concentrates on a more equal *division of power and wealth* as the goal. One doesn't say what kind of society one seeks, but rather stresses the failures one wishes to correct. But by concentrating in this manner on two points whose legitimacy appears unchallengeable, challenge leaves the essential point in the shadows and misunderstands itself.

The denunciations of power and its concentration don't change the fact that modern society has nothing other than the state around which to organize itself and in terms of which to gain its self-identity. In the same way, it is not efficacious to attack inequalities of pay if one doesn't ask why it is in terms of one's salary that one finds one's place in society, that one imagines one's future (and that of one's children).

If there is only money and power (struggles for money and for power) that give cohesion to modern societies and permit the individuals who compose them to act and to communicate, then the critique of power and of inequality is lucid but important. So long as it does not present alternatives to these last social relations, the critique has as its horizon only a society even more impoverished than the one we know: a scattering of individuals, a world where one can no longer situate oneself in relation to others.

If one doesn't concern oneself with another possible form of social relations, the denunciation of power and money is impotent or will give rise only to a sterile utopia—namely, that there is no longer any society, nothing standing against individual desire.

Socialist politics formerly aimed at having social relations taken over by the state—a state that would disappear as its reforming work advanced and society moved toward harmony. Liberal politics formerly wagered that society would organize itself as long as individuals in it were free. Today, we know that these are both ways of destroying society: either by bureaucracy or by profit. But we also know that there must be a society capable of making collective choices and of developing diversified instruments to do so.

Up to the present, there have been societies that owed their consistency to the power of religious traditions, and secularized societies that scattered in individualism or succumbed to political totalitarianism. Today, we must go beyond this dilemma: the degradation of human relations and of the natural surroundings which is the consequence of individualism illustrates a dramatic need for "sociality," but that sociality cannot be a stable, quasi-dormant sociality as it was in premodern societies; it must be a sociality which is not religious, but political, that is, open to debate and intervention.

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III. *Toward a logic of emancipation of culture and law*

What is a society that considers itself as open to choice, that no longer rests on the contemplation of its identity, but which puts that identity freely into question? This is a new question, opened by the end of the power that secular and religious transcendence exercised on society. When common values can be put into question, then the choice is: to be a conscious society of debate and choice, or else not to be a society at all but only a *magma* moved simply by the play of individual interests or controlled by the bureaucrac.

To be a society is to have common ways of thinking, of imagining the world (a culture) and common norms that govern action (a law). Modern society is characterized by the fact that its laws and its culture are more than before the work of specialized institutions. Law and culture come to it as if from outside.

In modern society, law has become in principle the monopoly of state. The only norms that are imposed are those that are edicts of the law: no one is forced except by the law; on the other hand, "no one is considered to be ignorant of the law." These two principles imply that the collective life of groups is radically non-normative, the place where law is applied, but not where it can be formed. More, the state tends to become not just the unique center of the law; it becomes the unique center of social action. Modern administrations (those, for example, which have a global goal, like regional planning) do not act in terms of juridical principles, but in terms of their objective. Where the classical administration based its action on rules that permitted citizens to contest it on the basis of those rules, modern administration tends to proclaim its objectives (health, security, etc.), and then to get for itself the means of acting, which are then continually expanded. Thus, from the state's monopoly on the law, one moves to the control of society by the administration.

Modern societies take this direction because in them the state makes no reference, nor can it make reference, to any value that is collectively elaborated. Its only point of reference can be the good of the individual. Beyond a certain threshold, this formerly liberating principle becomes the most weighty of norms. For, in order to act, the state and the public bodies must have an idea of the individual and his needs—indeed, they must in fact (in urbanism, in education, in health care, etc.) practically impose that idea to which no one can object because the isolated individual cannot have an idea of what humanity ought to be. Because he participates in no affairs that go beyond his person, he gives himself up into the hands of merchants and bureaucrats who know what is good for him.

The same perverse evolution can be seen in culture. In secular society, in principle, each person can have her own view of the world; the choice of values is individual. This is made official by the fact that censorship of the expression of tastes and ideas has tended to disappear. In fact, in this manner, culture is transformed from an ordered ensemble of images that characterize a group to a supermarket, a collection of works and knowledge whose circulation is regulated by modes and by power. Culture is polarized by technology, which is apparently neutral but which in fact induces in reality an idea of needs and an idea of the manner of satisfying them. In particular, this agnostico-technological culture thinks that it is possible to *isolate* material progress from any anthropological view of the whole. It thinks that the gains from technology are, or could be, net gains.

Just as in the field of law the elaboration of norms is cut apart from particular individual or collective experiences, in the field of culture the images of the world float

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ever more in a universe with no organic consistency—unless they are clearly the means of manipulation, as in the field of advertising (that popular culture of our times).

Nonetheless, society is not so much outside of law and culture as one imagines. In a more or less sporadic manner, the rules and ideas edicted from above are diverted and subverted in practice. Society is not a mechanism operated from outside, but the site of a life which no power and no knowledge can wholly master. New meanings, new experiences emerge from this *magma* and seek recognition. The nature of modern power is to try to repress or co-opt these new meanings and experiences, for its nature is to want to do everything and to pretend to know everything; and its slogan is: organize the good of society by reducing it to passivity.

We think that it is possible to develop a positive logic, a logic of emancipation starting from these initiatives and resistances. This logic would be founded on the value of experience, and it would rediscover the past not as a norm, but as a suggestion and a proposition. It would affirm the possibility of inventing manners of living, the possibility of very diverse ethical inventions that communicate among themselves as profoundly as do aesthetic creations.

We are living the end of the social domination of religious values at the same time as the failure of the pseudo-transcendences (progress and revolution), which appeared as their necessary replacement. A Catholic culture such as that of France undergoes this double shock with a particular violence. It is necessary to learn to pose the ethical problems, the problem of common values, in a different manner than that of rigid unanimity and dissidence, of the permitted and the forbidden. The problems must be posed in terms of initiatives and creations.

IV. *Projects*

Esprit is a monthly publication. It is also working groups and meetings of readers —people united by a free confrontation in terms of common concerns. Here is the way we can at present formulate the projects and themes in terms of which we are trying to structure the medium of exchange and confrontation that we want to be:

A. *The modern state and society*: The modern state is an activist and conquering state, a technician of the social. By what means does it become the only channel by which the citizens can express their will? How does it try to domesticate and channel diverging political expressions? These questions imply that we question:

(a) The role of political parties in the definition of social problems and in the mechanism that makes these problems, once they are seen, the concern of the state;

(b) The relation of the various administrations (social, urbanist, military, etc.) to the milieu that they want to control;

(c) Historically, the manner in which different social groups (peasants, workers, etc.) have acquired what is called a political consciousness;

(d) The contradiction that makes at the same time the state as supposed universal helper into the enemy of all—thus, on the manner in which society flees the control by the state;

(e) The inversion that leads a state whose role was *to open* up society become *the manager of* that society.

B. *Culture:* Popular cultuers have been the greatest victims of modernization, of the extension of scientific and technical culture. There are no longer protected sites, no longer reservations for the "urban Indians." Popular culture appears to be the height of folklore and of nostalgia. Yet, one sees with the crisis of rationalist culture a return from all corners of modest, unformed, timid kinds of knowledge, which is

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precisely what technical culture repressed, and due to whose lack it fails (e.g, neighborhood sociability, popular medicine, popular religion, etc.).

This is the sign that one must seek a new relation between experience and knowledge. This new relation is the condition that will permit the spread of a modern popular culture, which at present is reduced to the quasi-mute state of traces, resistances and clandestine deviations. If one wants a non-technocratic society, one must understand the irreducibility of a certain private (*propre*) space that the most dominated groups manage to maintain, as well as the enrichment and possible growth of that space. And in particular, one must understand the questions posed by the massive existence of a scientific apparatus separated from a strictly reserved and restricted knowledge.

The role of modern *art* and *literature*, too, must be analyzed in a complementary manner. Why, in particular in French culture, is there that tendency toward an unlimited critique, which reduces works to materials and to protocols of experiments in order to use them in a project of total knowledge, sometimes for a theory of integral revolution? Does the culture of recognized works, the culture of the *avant-garde*, so often fascinated by the idea of knowledge more than by that of communication, play a role in spite of its proclaimed intentions in the present-day tendency to reduce society to an organization? To what degree and under what conditions can art and literature change public language, reconstitute the mediations that permit mute experience and the common ethical questioning to be recognized without being dominated and taken over by the old orthodoxies?

It is in this framework that one begins to see the possible role of religious cultures in modern society. Freed from their pretense of universal mastery, they can recall the ineluctibly contingent character of the basic choices that the societies that emerged from the Enlightenment thought they could avoid. They can bear witness to the fact that traditions and collective memories can inspire us. By reflecting on their roots and their aims, they can show that to admit a plurality of world views is not the same as resignation before an absurd dispersion.

C. *Growing up* (*L'entrée dans la vie*): When the choice of values is a strictly individual affair, how can the relations among generations be structured, how can the young understand the projects that give them access to society? Can the growing up that used to take place through initiation, by the acceptance of the values of adults, take place through initiative and invention?

D. *National political cultures:* Modern thinking has accustomed us to see in contemporary history only a process of uniformization directed by economic development and confronting archaic resistances. One must learn to see things differently: to see that differences continue to play a role in our world, an active and essential role. In particular, this is the case for national differences. The last three years of economic crisis is, from this point of view, remarkable: faced with a decline in growth, the increase of unemployment, social problems, generational problems and problems of political legitimacy, the European countries have each reacted in their own manner, as a function of the resources that each found in its own political tradition. Systematic comparisons need to be made here. Their effect could aid us in going beyond the flat view of modernity in which we are inured.

E. *The question of law and of ethics:* At least in Europe, political life was largely marked, if not dominated, by the ideas of socialism and revolution. These ideas evoked a goal, a solution. Without this point of reference, one sees a return to the center of concern, with a new force, of the idea of the "rights of man." Formerly, this

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idea was thought of as marginal or surpassed; at best, it pointed to limits to action, such as torture. Henceforth, there is more to be said. Politically, we have to take a negative road; we only know that in our neighbor there is something that is irreducible, something non-manipulable. Can one go beyond that spiritual experience of limits to conceive of a public action that is not reducible to an action aimed at taking power; something that would be an ethical action in competition and still in solidarity with other actions of the same type? Can one conceive of a law that would not be monopolized by the state?

To think about the law is not only to think about the limits of the state and the technocracy; it is also to reflect on the capacity to generate norms. It is to distinguish innovative social conflicts: those that change the recognized legitimacies. It is to speak and act so that outside the state, society exists as more than brutal competition. The material and human congestion from which we suffer necessitates a re-elaboration of collective life in the midst of a plurality of experiences and choices. This means that juridical activity (the invention and the confrontation of norms) is one of the keys to the problem of modern societies.

THE PROBLEM OF POSITIVISM IN THE WORK OF NICOS POULANTZAS

by Martin Plaut

In his assessment of Miliband, Poulantzas objects that instead of attacking orthodox theory by presenting a different "problematic," or set of theoretical constructs, Miliband opposes concepts with facts, thereby "...placing himself on their own terrain."[1] The warning is appropriate and is one that I intend to heed in considering Poulantzas's work. I will therefore not present an alternative set of data, nor examine the internal consistency of his categories, although this would represent a legitimate approach.[2] Instead, I intend to examine certain of Poulantzas's key concepts by considering their origins in Althusser and before him in the work of Bachelard.[3] This is of the utmost importance, for their theoretical coherence rests upon this foundation. It will, therefore, be necessary to devote considerable attention to Althusser in order to develop an adequate critique of Poulantzas. But before proceeding to examine the Althusserian system, it is necessary to elaborate some of the categories in which this analysis will be undertaken.

Habermas has developed a critique of social relations based on a careful reconsideration of such desperate works as German Idealism, structural functionalism, systems analysis and hermeneutics. Most important in this context is his reconsideration of Marx in his essay, "The Idea of the Theory of Knowledge as Social

1. N. Poulantzas in R. Blackburn, *Ideology in Social Science* (London, 1972), p. 42.

2. This approach is followed in many studies. See, e.g., B. Hindess and P. Hirst, *Precapitalist Modes of Production* (London, 1975), Chapter 1, and E. Wright, "Class Boundaries in Advanced Capitalist Societies," *New Left Review* 98 (July-August 1976).

3. I shall examine Althusser's categories, upon which Poulantzas relies, and not Althusser's work on the state in "Lenin and Philosophy," which has little original to say on the subject and chiefly consists of an extended play upon the fact that the state employs ideology (of which education forms the most important element under capitalism) as well as repression in order to maintain the political power of the ruling class.

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Theory."[4] In this essay Habermas identifies the self-generative process of mankind as being the result of two forms of activity: "While instrumental activity corresponds to the constraint of external nature and the level of the forces of production determines the extent of technical control over natural forces, communicative action stands in correspondence to the suppression of man's own nature. The institutional framework determines the extent of repression by the unreflected, "Natural" forces of social dependence and political power, for repression is rooted in prior history and tradition. A society owes emancipation from the external forces of nature to labor processes, that is to the production of technically exploitable knowledge.... Emancipation from the compulsion of internal nature succeeds to the degree that institutions based on force are replaced by an organization of social relations that is bound only to communication free from domination. This does not occur directly through productive activity, but rather through the revolutionary activity of struggling classes (including the critical activity of reflective sciences).[5]

Habermas goes on to show that in his material studies, Marx displays a sensitivity to both dimensions, but that at a categorical level he assumes a convergence in his "*...reduction of the self generative act of the human species to labor.*"[6] This allows a natural scientific interpretation of a science of man to take place, as *it reduces the* development of consciousness to a by product of man's interaction with nature. With such an interpretation the necessity for social theory to incorporate a notion of critique is made redundant and the way is cleared for the manipulative interest inherent in the concern of the natural sciences to be extended to the social life process. As Habermas maintains, science lacks the element of reflection and the interest in bringing the social subject to self consciousness.[7] It is this conception of social theory as a natural science by Marx that Wellmer labels a latent positivism.[8] Schroyer has shown that this problem has unintended consequences: "First, as mentioned above, the methodological nature of the human sciences has been misunderstood and the Marxist critique has been represented as a type of materialistic scientism. Consequently it has tended toward an economistic science which presents social evolution in a deterministic manner.... Secondly, there has been an authoritarian use of critique by later Marxists which in the organizational theory of Leninism reduces the struggle for political emancipation to strategies for unquestioned instrumental ends. Marxism has evolved into an elitist paramilitary tradition which subordinates theoretical reflection and human liberation to the instrumental ends of 'revolutionary' power acquisition."[9] Thus, unlike other Marxists, who are content to find fault with certain later interpretations of his project (the Second International and Stalin providing favorite targets), critical theory attacks certain fundamental weaknesses in the work of Marx himself, which they believe to be common to much Enlightenment theory.[10]

Wellmer is careful to state in his critique of Marx that the positivism he discerns in

4. J. Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest* (London, 1972), Chapter 3.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
8. A. Wellmer, *Critical Theory of Society* (New York, 1971), p. 67.
9. Although I believe that both deformations are found in Althusser, I only intend to discuss the former. The latter, generally labelled Stalinism, has an impact upon Marxism that is discussed by Callinicos (in *Althusser's Marxism* [London, 1976], pp. 102-106). Colletti remarks that he detects an "organic sympathy" on the part of Althusser for Stalinism. (L. Colletti, "A Political and Philosophical Interview," *New Left Review* 86 [July-August 1974], p. 17.)
10. See in this regard M. Horkheimer and T. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York, 1972); J. Habermas, *op.cit.*,; Wellmer, *op.cit.*

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Marx is not to be found in an overt form, but is the logical outcome of his categories.[11] In Althusser what is implicit becomes explicit. Working in France in the 1960s, Althusser produced a theoretical anti-humanism in part at least as a reaction to the humanism of the French Communist Party.[12] Against this Althusser states without hesitation that "...in conformity with the tradition constantly reiterated by the classics of Marxism, we may claim that Marx established a new *science*: the science of the history of "social formations." To be more precise, I should say that Marx "opened up" for scientific knowledge a new "continent," that of *history* just as Thales opened up the "continent of mathematics for scientific knowledge, and Galileo opened up the 'continent' of physical nature for scientific knowledge."[13] The quotation could be repeated almost indefinitely, for it colors Althusser's every remark; but this one is of particular interest in that it is quite specific in equating Marxism with the natural sciences.[14] Yet it would be a mistake to think that Althusser is referring to the natural sciences in a general way, for he is being absolutely specific. When Althusser refers to science he draws upon the Bachelardian conception of science, and for very good reasons, as we shall see. Because of the specificity of his reference, it is necessary to undertake a brief detour in order to establish what Bachelard understands by the term science.

For Bachelard, the difference between scientific and everyday experience originates in the natural tendencies of the mind. The mind spontaneously engages in a dreamlike reverie which is responsible for all man's acts of imagination, such as art. Science, or the rational, can only be constituted as a tremendous existential effort, "The first experience, or to be more exact, the first observation is always a first obstacle for the scientific culture. In effect, this first obstacle presents itself with a luxuriance of images; it is picturesque, concrete, natural, simple.... We begin our investigation by showing that there is a rupture and not at all continuity between observation and experimentation."[15] Having made the break, the power of imagination is, however, not vanquished and continues to threaten to reintegrate science into ordinary thought. The destruction of non-scientific mind by means of which scientific mind establishes itself is only partial, hence, "We must constantly demonstrate what remnants of common knowledge still reside in scientific knowledge."[16] Nor is a single break enough: in the progress of scientific thought epistemological obstacles arise which must be overcome by further breaks. Science is therefore preserved by two kinds of breaks: one that founds the science and another that ensures its continued progress.

Bhaskar quotes what must constitute one of the central phrases of Bachelard: "science has no object outside its own activity."[17] Bachelard asserts that science does not deal with empirical phenomena, but with "secondary objects" produced by science in the source of experiments. In the process of this labor, sufficient phenomena are

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11. Wellmer, *op.cit.*, p. 72.
12. P. Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism* (London, 1976), p. 39.
13. L. Althusser, *For Marx* (Middlesex, 1969), pp. 13-14.
14. Marx himself at times falls into this trap. See, e.g., his preface to the first German edition of *Capital* (in Vol. I [London, 1974], p. 19).
15. Bachelard, quoted in K. Tribe, "On the Production and Structuring of Scientific Knowledge," *Economy and Society*, Vol. 2 (1973), p. 469.
16. G. Bachelard, *The Philosophy of No* (New York, 1968), p. 35.
17. Bachelard, in R. Bhaskar, "Feyerabend and Bachelard: Two Philosophies of Science," *New Left Review*, 94 (November-December 1975), p. 51. Bachelard is insistent upon this point. He maintains that "In all circumstances the *immediate* must yield to the *constructed*." Bachelard, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

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produced to undertake the practice of science. This is reflected in the work of Althusser in a modified form when he states, "a science never works on an existence whose essence is pure immediacy and singularity ('sensations' or 'individuals'). It always works on something 'general,' even if this has the form of a 'fact.' At its moment of constitution, as for physics with Galileo and for the science of the evolution of social formations (historical materialism) with Marx, a science always works on existing concepts or *Vorstellungen*, that is, a preliminary Generality 1 of an ideological nature."[18] If taken seriously, this can lead Althusserian students into considerable difficulties when dealing with data, and may lead them to fall foul of solipsism, as may be seen when Hindess and Hirst maintain: "Our constructions and our arguments are theoretical and they can only be eavaluated in theoretical terms—in terms, that is to say, of their rigor and theoretical coherence. They cannot be refuted by any empiricist recourse to the supposed 'facts of history'."[19]

The last aspect of Bachelard's work to which I wish to draw attention to cast light upon Althusser's problematic is his concept of the 'scientific city' as the cornerstone guaranteeing his epistemology. This 'city' is made up of the institutions and personnel engaged in the scientific enterprise and entry into its number socializes the scientist into breaking with his imaginative life. As Bhaskar notes: "It is the scientific city which holds the criteria of objectivity and truth. The objectivity of scientific knowledge is thus grounded in inter-subjectivity, the classical stance of Kantian philosophical idealism."[20] This scientific city finds its parallel in Althusser's category of theoretical practice, which he formulates as an alternative to traditional epistemology. Althusser rejects any form of epistemology that attempts to come to grips with the manner in which the world can be known, the relationship between subject and object as being "ideological."[21] Instead, truth is guaranteed inter-subjectively by a particular level of social existence: "*theoretical practice* is indeed its own criterion, and contains in itself definite protocols with which to *validate* the quality of its product, i.e., the criteria of the scientificity of the products of scientific practice."[22] The problems posed by epistemology are thus rejected in favor of the scientific method.

The fascinating aspect of this rejection is that it follows exactly the pattern established by early positivism. In his essay on positivism, Habermas traces the emergence of exactly the same trend in the work of Comte. "Positivism marks the end of the theory of knowledge. In its place emerges the philosophy of science. Transcendental logical inquiry into the conditions of possible knowledge aimed as well at explicating the meaning of knowledge as such. Positivism cuts off this inquiry,

18. Althusser, *op.cit.*, pp. 183-184. As with many of the concepts borrowed from Bachelard, this one is not ackowledged by Althusser. The only borrowing that he seems to appear to acknowledge is that of the epistemological break (see Althusser, *op.cit.*, pp. 32, 168, 185).

19. Hindess and Hirst, *op.cit.*, p. 3. It is statements such as this that have led François George to attack Althusser for Stalinism. George believes that if theory is all powerful, history is no longer made by man, but by a party that decides what has and what has not taken place. In the end, "history is the theory of history projected into reality by bureaucratic power." (F. George, "Reading Althusser," *Telos* 7 [Spring 1971], p. 97.) Poulantzas has recently acknowledged some of the difficulties into which this leads (N. Poulantzas, "The Capitalist State: A Reply to Miliband and Lacla," *New Left Review* 95 [January-February 1976], p. 66.) For further discussion, see M. Plaut and T. Plaut, Book Review, *Social Dynamics*, 2:2 (December 1976).

20. Bhaskar, *op.cit.*, p. 51.

21. Althusser in L. Althusser and E. Balibar, *Reading Capital* (London, 1970), pp. 52-56.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

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which it conceives as having become meaningless in virtue of the fact of the modern sciences. Knowledge is implicitly defined by the achievement of the sciences."[23] (As Marx remarked: history repeats itself.) Instead of an epistemology, positivism based its philosophy of science on a collection of pre-critical elements that it combined in an eclectic fashion. But it is here that Althusser, on the one hand, and Comte and Mach on the other, part company, for although Althusser is a positivist, he is not an empiricist, and the demand for sense certainty made by early positivists would be anathema to him. The time has come to try to establish in exactly what sense Althusser can be labelled positivist.

Althusser's positivism arises from his scientism; from his demand for a rejection as ideological of all forms of knowledge not produced by science. Habermas sees in scientism the essence of positivism. "Positivism stands and falls with the principle of scientism, that it that the meaning of knowledge is defined by what the sciences do and can thus be adequately explicated through the methodological analysis of scientific procedures... The replacement of epistemology by the philosophy of science is visible in that the knowing subject is no longer the system of reference."[24] In the work of Althusser, the knowing subject is explcitly and effectively banished from Marxism. Indeed, the scientificity of Marxism is based on this very exorcism. And rightly so. The conception of Marxism as a science is incompatible with the centrality of the notion of the ego as both the object of determinations and the active subjectivity vis-à-vis nature.

While in Marx there was sufficient ambiguity for the idea of critique and science to exist side by side, Althusser proposes a reading that eliminates all ambiguity and replaces it with an unequivocal science of man. The effects of this are numerous, and only some of them can be considered here, but perhaps most importantly, the establishment of a science eliminates any notion of emancipation. Colletti makes this point with great force: "What does it mean to say that for Marx history is a process without a subject? It means that history is not the site of any human emancipation. But for the real Marx, of course, the revolution was precisely this—a process of collective emancipation."[25]

The critique of ideology that Marx inherited from German idealism is negated at a stroke, and world history is relegated to an endless night of permanent ideology. This is a consequence that Althusser faces without blanching: "And I am not going to steer clear of the critical question: *historical materialism cannot conceive that even a communist society could ever do without ideology*, be it ethics, arts or 'world outlook'."[26] The manipulative interest inherent in a scientific interest is installed in Althusserian theory as the Leninist vanguard becomes scientist, carefully altering the degrees of ideology necessary for the better appropriation of surplus value under a future socialism with very restricted horizons. The aim of emancipation can only be perceived as the lessening of the hours of the working day combined with an egalitarian conformism.

The misconceived venture of "purifying" Marx to found a science takes its revenge on Althusser in the problem of rigor. For, despite the fact that Althusser insists that he is being scientific (an insistence that apparently leads him to adopt the most turgid and repetitive style), many of his concepts are poorly founded. Thus Glucksmann argues that Althusser's entire conceptual apparatus just "happens" and that it is on the

23. Habermas, *op.cit.*, p. 67.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.
25. Colletti, *op.cit.*, p. 16.
26. Althusser, *op.cit.*, p. 232.

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flimsiest of grounds.[27] Kolakowski, discussing Althusser's concept of ideology, is able to show that it could apply to a philosophy of history, the history of science, paranoid delusions or to poetry with equal ease.[28] He goes on to charge Althusser with producing little more than vague banalities, and of not knowing the difference between stating a proposition and proving it.[29] Miriam Glucksmann concludes that despite his apparent rigor, Althusser's concepts "fall short of his avowed aim—most of his concepts turn out to be dogmas, words or assertions."[30] Nor is it surprising that it should be so, for any study of social development must of necessity include an interpretive framework. The concepts that are used, no matter how carefully defined, lack any basis upon which a rigor similar to that found in the natural sciences might be anchored. In the following section we will see the difficulties that arise for Poulantzas when he attempts to use a term such as "limit," but the problem arises essentially from the application of a technical (or pseudo-technical) language to a social system. The quality of the subject resists the annihilating attempts of Althusserian positivism.

Having examined some aspects of the Althusserian system, we are now in a position to assess its impact upon Poulantzas. Without a doubt the most serious deformation inflicted by this sophisticated positivism is in the specific place and status of the subject. The category is banned and in its place we find "agents" who "bear" the structure,[31] while existing in a permanently impenetrable fog of ideology.[32] Every cultural and artistic creation is subject to blanket rejection as ideology. As Adorno remarked, "In wishing to wipe away the whole as if with a sponge, they develop an affinity to barbarism."[33] The rejection is as vague as it is general for the role and function of ideology is not clarified. If it requires such an enormous leap to break with ideology to enter science, how does this happen? If ideology is so all-powerful, how is Poulantzas capable of escaping from its clutches?[34]

A more important effect on the whole of his system arises from the role Poulantzas assigns to classes, which are the result of the effect of the structure on the agents or supports of the structure in the field of social relations. The effect of the structure is to produce class struggles at every level of the structure overdetermined by the political class struggle, which has as its objective the state, which in turn serves as the cohesive factor in a formation.[35] Hence it is the political class struggle that brings about the transformations of the social formation.[36] In other words, the entire structure is

27. M. Glucksmann, *Structuralist Analysis in Contemporary Social Thought* (London, 1974), p. 71.
28. L. Kolakowski, "Althusser's Marx," *Socialist Register* (1971), p. 113.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 127.
30. A. Glucksmann, "A Ventriloquist Structuralism," *New Left Review* 72 (March-April 1972), p. 136.
31. Poulantzas, *op.cit.* (1973), p. 62.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 207.
33. Adorno in P. Comnerton, ed., *Critical Sociology* (Middlesex, 1976), p. 273.
34. Bridges observes correctly that the lack of cohesion of belief systems and the protests that are generated against the ruling class demonstrate that ideology cannot be understood apart from an appreciation of the critical capacity of the subject. A. Bridges, "Nicos Poulantzas and the Marxist Theory of the State," *Politics and Society*, 4:2 (Winter 1974), pp. 184-185.
35. Poulantzas, *op.cit.*, pp. 76-77.
36. In more strictly Althusserian texts, this point is made with even greater force (leading to even greater rigidity). Hindess and Hirst state categorically, "We have used the term 'transition' to refer to a condition in which a specific mode of production is subject to transformation and to the non-reproduction of its political, ideological and economic conditions of existence.... In particular, we must insist that transition (and non-transition) can only be understood in terms of

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propelled by this motor of history. Yet, the motor is enfeebled by the removal of its mainspring: the subject and its replacement by the agents. In what way is this enfeebling? Precisely in the sense that any notion of motivation is removed. While it is perfectly true that classes are affected by the objective structure of society (or levels of a formation) if we remove the mediations between subjective factors bearing upon individuals and thereby upon classes, the result is a weakened and determined conceptual system. To say, as Poulantzas does, that ideology is a level of the structure and that it socializes the agent into his class role is not nearly adequate, for it leaves us entirely at a loss to know in what way we can integrate the role of the individual psyche into the social system. The insights of Freud are not only regressed behind, but effectively banished for all time.[37] Yet Poulantzas is unaware of the implications of his categories. He wishes blithely to borrow from the work of Habermas on legitimation crises.[38] The borrowing is totally illegitimate, for it clashes with the rest of his conceptual system. As Habermas maintains, 'Systems are not presented as subjects; but according to the pre-technical usage, *only* subjects can be involved in crises."[39]

Similarly, Poulantzas wishes to handle questions of ideology in a sensitive manner, but is prevented from doing so in anything like a systematic fashion by the structures of his analytical framework. Cultural and ideological problems therefore lack the rigor that is accorded them, for example, by Habermas under the title of communicative interaction. Only if these are seen as interests in their own right, not determined in the last instance by the economic, can they be comprehensively considered.[40] It is for this reason that perfectly valid insights languish in Poulantzas' work without proper foundation. Take, for example, his observation that the dominant ideology may contain feudal elements[41] or that "a dominant ideology profoundly impregnated by the way of life of a class or fraction can continue to remain the dominant ideology even if this class or fraction is no longer dominant."[42] Perfectly correct! But to merely state that these are "relatively autonomous" or have their own specific rhythms is totally inadequate. It is an ultimate irony that the essentialist-humanist-teleological-Hegelian scholars should end up more concrete than the scientific pupils of Maitre Louis himself.

The impact of positivism in this area has the effect that we discerned in the work of Althusser: the curtailing of rigorous analysis. In its place we find the pseudo-rigor that employs terms (generally without definition) as if they have a precise and unquestionable utility.[43] "Limits" is one such term. Take, for example, its use in the

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certain determinate conditions of class struggle and as a possible outcome of that struggle." Hindess and Hirst, *op.cit.*, p. 278.

37. On the regression of theory in this field, see R. Jacoby, *Social Amnesia* (New York, 1975).
38. N. Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* (London, 1975), p. 173.
39. J. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (London, 1976), p. 3.
40. See for example Habermas' work on distorted communication. *Op.cit.*, Chapter 17.
41. Poulantzas, *op.cit.*, p. 203.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 203.
43. Miliband has also attacked Poulantzas for his lack of rigor. Cf. R. Miliband, "Poulantzas and the Capitalist State," *New Left Review*, 82 (November-December 1973), pp. 86-87. Woolfe points out that the manner in which Poulantzas deals with his opposition is equally slack: "Throughout 'Political Power and Social Classes' non-Althusserian ideas are tagged with the allegedly unpleasant label of 'humanist' (e.g., 'we risk falling into the humanist outlook') or 'historicist'. These conditions are made to appear as reprehensible as psoriasis or acne; if one does not prune them, they will spread." A. Woolfe, "New Directions in the Marxist Theory of Politics," *Politics and Society*, 4:2 (Fall 1973), p. 141. Certainly this tendency to dismiss with

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introduction to the chapter entitled "Fundamental Characteristics of the Capitalist State." Here Poulantzas writes: "The capitalist state, in which the specific autonomy of instances is located by its relation to the relations of production, *sets the limits* which circumscribe the relation of the field of the class struggle to its own regional structures. In other words, these state structures, as they appear in the relation of the instances, *carry inscribed within them a set of variations* which in delimiting the class struggle achieve concrete reality according to the effects which this struggle has on the state within the limits thus set." [44] The words carry with them an air of authority, as if absolute clarity has been achieved, but the effect is a result merely of stylistic pyrotechnics lacking the precision to which it lays claim. After all, we are provided with no criteria by means of which to judge when a limit has been reached, and on having been reached, what will follow. While it is possible to provide universally acceptable criteria for judging when and under what circumstances a bar of metal will suffer fatigue, the same is not possible when considering a social system. Natural science employs a language which attains nomological closure, an attainment that cannot be met by social sciences that can only be subject to discursive justification, because of the very different role and interaction of subject and object.[45] Without an intersubjectively agreed upon basis, any study in this area must fall into dogmatism. In the end, positivism produces the illusion of competence while undermining itself.

Althusser's replacement of epistemology by a philosophy of science led, as we mentioned, to difficulties in the utilization of empirical material. In Poulantzas, this is reflected in a vast proliferation of categories in the hope that every possible contingency will be taken care of. Thus, in dealing with classes, we find that Poulantzas distinguishes between dominant and dominated classes, class fractions, strata and categories, with fractions being subdivided (in the case of the dominant class) into hegemonic and reigning fractions. These combine into power blocs, engage each other in alliances and constitute themselves as "supporting" classes, and so it continues. Nor are these terms used in any normal fashion. Supporting classes, for example, support the state without any real political sacrifice on the part of the power bloc, act out of fear of the working class and are typically drawn from the small-holding peasantry and lumpen proletariat.[46] While this may be an accurate description of the class situation at the end of the first period of the parliamentary Republic in France, to invent a specific category to deal with this contingency is to indulge in ad-hocery of the worst order. What has in fact taken place is that in an effort to retain the flexibility necessary for dealing with complex situations, Poulantzas has so stretched his categorical structure to include an ever increasing number of concepts that he is left with a system that has burst its logical constraints and in which almost anything can happen. The entire bundle of categories is dependent upon the single thread of a "determination in the last instance of the economic" for its coherence. No matter how frequently this determination is restated, it is insufficiently

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labels reaches a peak of imperfection when Poulantzas accuses Marcuse, Adorno and Goldmann of implicitly accepting the 'end of ideology' thesis. Cf. Poulantzas, *op.cit.* (1973), p. 196. It would indeed be difficult to find theorists further removed from Bell than the three whom he accuses. To believe that the concept of total reification implies an end of ideology is nothing short of fantastic.

44. Poulantzas, *ibid.*, pp. 187-188.

45. See in this regard "Reason and Interest: Retrospect on Kant and Fichte," Chapter 9 of Habermas, *op.cit.*

46. Poulantzas, *op.cit.*, pp. 243-244.

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powerful to maintain the system's unity. Essentially, Poulantzas falls between the two poles of a single determination (such as that constructed by Hindess and Hirst) and a multiplicity of determinations (to be found in the work of Habermas). The end product lacks theoretical coherence.

GEORGES HAUPT, 1928-1978

by Paul Breines

Georges Haupt died of a heart attack in March of this year. He was 50 years old. His name and work were not known to all *Telos* associates and readers, but for those who had felt even briefly his extraordinary spirit and energy, his death, a great shock, casts a shadow on everything. For Georges Haupt was a model of that rare type—the catalyst, the inspirer, a personal and intellectual life-force. It is a rotten but typical fact that only with his death do we begin to realize just how many lives he touched, how much work he encouraged, how many projects he helped initiate, how wonderful a socialist intellectual he was. Jokes are often made about jet-set Marxism, conference-circuit leftists and so on; they are often appropriate. But Georges Haupt, who died en route from a conference, represented the other side of the coin: he showed how much a traveling demiurge of socialist studies could really accomplish in our time.

Born in 1928 in the western, Hungarian-speaking part of Romania, Georges Haupt lost his family to Nazism and was himself in Auschwitz and Buchenwald. As a young Communist, educated in the USSR after World War II, he rose to precocious prominence in the Historical Institute of the Romanian Academy of Sciences, serving as the director of its modern history section for five years while still in his twenties. His work centered around the history of the labor and revolutionary movements in Romania, and on their relations to parallel movements in Russia. Having been a deportee, Georges Haupt became an emigré in 1958, when he left Romania for good. Settling in Paris, he emerged as assistant director and then (from 1969) director of the Slavic Studies section of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, also serving on the editorial boards of several journals, including *Le mouvement social*, France's main labor history review. Beginning in the late 1960s, he undertook travels of a different sort, namely, as visiting professor several times in the history departments at the University of Wisconsin, at Northwestern University, in Zurich and at the Free University in West Berlin. At the time of his death, he had begun what was to have been a series of visits to the Fernand Braudel Center at the State University of New York at Binghamton, where he initiated a seminar on socialism and labor movements in international perspective. He was also directly and indirectly involved in numerous institutes and projects in Europe, England, and here ("Mole Editions" of Urizen Books; *New German Critique*; *Telos*; and in its first years at the University of Wisconsin, *Radical America* found Georges Haupt among its supporters).

Georges Haupt brought his experiences (which might well have produced an anti-communist) and mastery of a great range of languages to the work of historical reappraisal of the major forms of socialism, the Second and Third Internationals. As an historian of socialism, Georges Haupt was fondly but inappropriately referred to by J.P. Nettl as an archive rat. That he burrowed through and digested mountains of documents is not in question. The point is simply that this was no end in itself. His

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studies, balanced and judicious almost to a fault, were at all points engaged, committed: to the task of grasping his own and his East European generation's biography within the larger story of the hopes and failures of modern socialism. It is not surprising that most of his research and publications focused upon the complex and anguished connections between Marxism, revolution, nationalism, and war. His major works include *Socialism and the Great War: The Collapse of the Second International* (1965; English edition, 1972); *Les Bolchéviques par eux-mêmes* (1969); and together with Michel Löwy and Claudie Weill, *Les Marxistes et la question nationale* (1974). At the time of his death he had begun new researches into the history of migrant labor in Europe, and was working as editor of a volume of new essays on the Second International, which will be published posthumously. A forthcoming number of *Le mouvement social* will contain evaluations of his work and a complete bibliography of his writings; additional material will appear soon in *New German Critique*.

Part of Georges Haupt's greatness, apart from the fact that he seemed to know everything about the history of socialism, lay in the enthusiasm with which he shared this knowledge with students and friends. He had that rare capacity not only to help one conceptualize and refine one's own work, but to come to *feel* its significance in the broader historical scene. If in our time the socialist *Weltgeist* has found its home in the libraries and around the seminar tables, then Georges Haupt was surely among its chief agents. Beyond that? Cosmopolitan and unpretentious, ironic and responsible, Georges Haupt combined his great learning and emergent prestige with an irrepressible penchant for laughter, self-deprecation, and small talk. Contact with him was a blessing.

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Reviews:

Michel Foucault. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* New York: Pantheon, 1977. $10.95. 333 pages.

Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews.* Edited with Introduction by Donald F. Bouchard. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977. 240 pages.

Michel Foucault. *La Volonté de Savoir.* Vol. I of *Histoire de la Sexualité.* Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1976. 211 pages.

Jean Baudrillard. *Oublier Foucault.* Paris: Editions Galilée, 1977. 87 pages.

This writer who has warned us of the "ideological" function of both the *oeuvre* and the *author* as unquestioned forms of discursive organization has gone quite far in constituting for both these "fictitious unities" the name (with all the problems of such a designation) Michel Foucault. One text under review, *La Volonté de Savoir*, is the methodological introduction of a projected five-volume history of sexuality. It will apparently circle back over that material which seems to have a special fascination for Foucault: the gradual emergence of medicine as an institution, the birth of political economy, demography and linguistics as "human sciences," the invention of incarceration and confinement for the control of the "other" in society (the mad, the libertine, the criminal) and that special violence that lurks beneath the power to control discourse. "We must conceive discourse as a violence that we do to things or, at all events, as a practice we impose upon them." [1] These themes, which Foucault has pursued through various histories, are now being further distilled in the study of the delinquent, the hysterical woman or the masturbating child—not as those perpetual figures in the triumph of medical or penal reform and humanism, but precisely those created, constituted, and invented by this "disciplinary society."

Further, this history of sexuality, as well as the study of prisons, is Foucault's first extended work after a period of self-criticism and redefinition of both his theoretical work and its political implications. Foucault says of *Discipline and Punish* (*Surveiller et Punir*) that it is "my first book" and we are to understand from such a statement the importance of that period of reformulation, rather than the outward continuity of his themes. In both *Archaeology of Knowledge,* which remains his least discussed or examined work, and the essay "What Is an Author?" Foucault has begun with a criticism of his study *The Order of Things* (*Les mots et les choses*). This work seems to have crystallized certain problems not only in its theme but in its mode of analysis. He raises questions concerning the use of "authors" to designate a historical period, the problematic aspect of the concept of *episteme*, the illusion behind the use, even in its ironic sense, of "words" and "things" as a categorical approach, and finally the admittedly paradoxical conclusion of the book: "In attempting to reconstitute the lost unity of language, is one carrying to its conclusion a thought which is that of the 19th century, or is one pursuing forms that are already incompatible with it? The dispersion of language is linked, in fact, in a fundamental way, with the archaeological event we may designate as the disappearance of Discourse. To discover the vast play of language contained once more within a single space might be just as decisive a leap towards a

1. Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York, 1972), p. 229.

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wholly new form of thought as to draw to a close a mode of knowing constituted during the previous century. It is true that I do not know what to reply to such questions, or, given those alternatives, what term I should choose. I cannot even guess whether I shall ever be able to answer them, or whether the day will come when I shall have reasons enough to make any such choice. Nevertheless, I now know why I am able, like everyone else, to ask them—and I am unable not to ask them today. Only those who cannot read will be surprised that I have learned such a thing more clearly from Curvier, Bopp and Ricardo than from Kant or Hegel."[2]

It is fortunate that the most important essays of this critical period, which are not even easily available in French, have been collected together in a serviceable translation. Aside from excluding a useful early essay, "Nietzsche, Marx, Freud," and including an overly long interview at the end, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* contains the three central articles—"Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," "What Is an Author?" and "Theatrum Philosophicum." The Nietzsche article articulates the by now obvious impact of this philosopher on Foucault's approach to "histories" and his current concern with the relation between knowledge and power. The article, with its analysis of the concepts of *Entstehung* and *Herkunft*, shows Nietzsche as the inspiration behind *Discipline and Punish*, which is a kind of modern-day *Genealogy of Morals*. Also Foucault develops the notion of *wirkliche Historie* or "effective" history as a method *reversing* traditional historiography—i.e., emphasis on the unique or the micrological, seeing events as a struggle for power or appropriation of discourse, suspicion of "lofty" epochs and high ideals, a search for the "barbarous" confusions underneath authority and the affirmation of both perspective and passion behind knowledge: "The forces operating in history are not controlled by destiny as regulative mechanisms, but respond to haphazard conflict. They do not manifest the successive forms of a primordial intention and their attraction is not that of a conclusion, for [these forces] always appear through the singular randomness of events. The inverse of the Christian world. Spun entirely by a divine spider and different from the world of the Greeks, divided between the realm of will and the great cosmic folly, the world of effective history knows only one kingdom, without providence or final cause, where there is only 'the iron hand of necessity shaking the dice-box of chance'."[3]

"What Is an Author?" should be read with the English translation of *L'Ordre du discours*, which appears as the appendix to *Archaeology of Knowledge* under the title "The Discourse on Language." This remarkable speech, given when Foucault took the chair in systems of thought at the Collège de France, not only sets out a retrospective assessment of his own work, but an outline for future studies in the control over discourse that forms a whole with *Discipline and Punish* and *La Volonté de savoir*.[4] In such an intra-discursive approach, Foucault lays out both internal and external constraints, rules and prohibitions that not only form the possibility of discourse, but which link it to other social practices. They range from the "academic" sanction of official knowledge to the subterranean realm of "dirty words": "Disciplines constitute a system of control in the production of discourse, fixing its limits... We tend to see, in the author's fertility, in the multiplicity of commentaries...so many infinite

2. *The Order of Things* (New York, 1970), pp. 306-307.

3. *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, pp. 154-155. The editor Bouchard has littered the articles with what he considers helpful footnotes—whose value can be guaged from an example in which, after Foucault's mention of Hegel, Bouchard directs the reader to Karl Popper's essay "What Is Dialectic?" A kind of surreal intertextuality that Foucault would appreciate.

4. *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* also includes Foucault's summary of his first year's course at Collège de France under the title "History of Systems of Thought," pp. 199-204.

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resources available for the creation of discourse. Perhaps so, but they are nonetheless principles of constraint, and it is probably impossible to appreciate their positive, multiplicatory role without first taking into account their restrictive, constraining role... Exchange and communication are positive forces at play within complex but restrictive systems; it is probable that they cannot operate independently of these."[5]

"Theatrum Philosophicum" defies description or summary. It is a review of two books by Gilles Deleuze, *Différence et répétition* and *Logique du sens*—works that deal with the history of philosophy, specifically Greek and Roman. Without going into Deleuze's effort to blend Nietzsche and Freud in the reading of ancient philosophy, the conclusion of Foucault's appreciative review gives a flavor of its tone: "This is philosophy not as thought, but as theater: a theater of mime with multiple, fugitive and instantaneous scenes.... This is theater where the explosive laughter of the Sophists tears through the mask of Socrates; where Spinoza's methods conduct a wild dance in a decentered circle while substance revolves about like a mad planet; where a limping Fichte announces 'the fractured I—the dissolved self'; where Leibniz, having reached the top of the pyramid, can see through the darkness that celestial music is in fact a *Pierrot lunaire* (Schoenberg's song cycle). In the sentry box of the Luxembourg Gardens, Duns Scotus places his head through the circular window; he is sporting an impressive moustache; it belongs to Nietzsche, disguised as Klossowski."[6]

Foucault as a writer and stylist should be seen in relation to his early literary criticism. Fortunately, the English volume of essays contains some good selections from his writings for *Critique*, especially an interesting article on Georges Bataille's concept of "transgression." Bataille's work on eroticism has had a major impact on Foucault, who edited Bataille's collected works. Writing in the early days of both *Tel Quel* and *Critique*, Foucault has done analyses of Hölderlin, Blanchot, De Sade and a book on that strange, language-obsessed writer Raymond Roussel, whose death at the threshold of his own home unable to find the key to unlock his door is, needless to say, the central image of Foucault's study. In addition to the by-now obligatory contact with Lacan and Althusser, Foucault is the student of two of France's most significant philosophers—Jean Hyppolite and Georges Canguilhem. His first major work, *La Folie et Déraison*,[7] bears the unmistakable marks of the *Annales* school of historiography, which is another important, and often overlooked influence. Such a complex of influences and strains does not lend itself to easy categorization but rather tends to produce a kind of disoriented attempt at summary—as shown in the introduction by Bouchard to *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*. This has meant a paucity of good crititical treatments of Foucault's work. A small book appeared by Annie Guedez in the *psychothèque* series but it does not go into the self-critical period that seems now to be rather crucial.[8] In English, aside from some misleading appropriation by Hayden White,[9] the only extended use of Foucault's work, specifically *L'ordre du discours*, is by the literary critic Edward W. Said.[10]

5. *Archaeology of Knowledge*, pp. 224-225.
6. *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, p. 196.
7. Unfortunately, all that is available in English is the very abbreviated and unreliable translation under the title *Madness and Civilization*. Also the second edition of what is now called *Histoire de la Folie* contains two important appendices—one on Derrida and the other on culture and transgression.
8. Annie Guedez, *Foucault* (Paris, 1972). It contains a short bibliography.
9. Hayden V. White, "Foucault Decoded: Notes from Underground," *History and Theory*, 12:1 (1971), pp. 23-54.
10. Edward W. Said, *Beginnings* (New York, 1975), especially Chapter 5.

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Unfortunately, this gap is not filled by the recent Baudrillard book, *Oublier Foucault*. In spite of the fact that few thinkers are better suited to a critical confrontation with Foucault's work, Baudrillard has opted for a rather "tossed-off" piece of obscurantism. One cannot help, to borrow a phrase from Ricoeur, to approach this text with the "principle of suspicion." First, it is some 80 pages of enormous type and gaping margins that constitutes a glorified, overpriced article. Second, the very title warns of the problem. It would seem that Baudrillard has fallen prey to this French disease, caused no doubt by the difficulty of publishing or the strange celebrity status of intellectuals, of creating revolutions in thought every week or so, heralded by the declaration of the downfall and oblivion of whoever is currently riding the crest of popular acclaim. One wonders what could possibly be gained by "forgetting" such a writer, what problems has Foucault failed at that demand amnesia for their solution? But finally one understands, after 10 or so pages, that this is more like something read into a tape recorder than written. Though Foucault's theories on sexuality, repression, power, etc. are discussed, there is barely a quotation or reference. Criticism is of the "guilt by association" variety—Foucault has written favorably about Jacques Monod or Gilles Deleuze, therefore the positions of Monod or Deleuze can, without further ado, be attributed to Foucault. On the whole, a lot of polemic but very little insight and not much more is learned than what would be gained from comparing any of Baudrillard's early works with *L'Anti-Oedipe*, which turns out to be his real object of attack.[11] The same arguments reappear against "production" with the addition of Baudrillard's new theme of "defiance." Aside from some good points, both about Foucault's treatment of power and the micrological political analysis (dealt with later), most of the book is contained in the following: "Power is something that exchanges itself. Not in the economic sense but in the sense that power is realized (*s'accomplit*) according to a reversible cycle of seduction, defiance and ruse."[12] We are assured that, because he fails to grasp this, Foucault is a "mirror" of the very power he criticizes.

This review cannot hope to satisfy any of the demands for a critical survey, especially concentrating on *Archaeology of Knowledge* or Foucault's more theoretical-philosophical reflections. The aim here is much more limited, though it is hoped that the review will draw out themes for a broader survey. What follows is an exposition of the main themes in both the prison book and the introduction to the history of sexuality.

One does not have to read much of Foucault to find the recurring themes of confinement, compulsory objectification, the violence behind the authority of reason, the terror behind humanization and a distrust for the calm speech of doctors, educators and philosophers. The cultural sphere for Foucault is a malevolent world, or as he says, "We are less Greek than we think we are." For Foucault, culture is a vast machinery for the imposition of interpretation, a vast control that presents itself as knowledge and emancipation: "Signs are interpretations that strive to justify themselves and not the inverse. That is how the function of money is defined in the *Critique of Political Economy* and throughout the first volume of *Capital*. It is also how symptoms function in Freud. And again in Nietzsche words, justice, the binary classification of Good and Bad, consequently all signs, are arks. The sign is acquiring

11. See my comparison between Baudrillard's concept of symbolic exchange and the position of Deleuze and Guattari on desire and production in "Desire and the Commodity Form," *Telos* 35 (Spring 1978), pp. 88-123.

12. *Oublier Foucault*, p. 95.

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this new function of covering over interpretation, losing its simple being... and (once lost) is able to perpetuate an opening up of all the negative concepts that were and remain estranged from the traditional theory of signs.... [Our intention is] to organize within the sign a whole array of negative concepts; contradictions, oppositions...."[13]

We can begin with a central chapter in *La Folie et Déraison,* "Le Grand Renfermement." Here Foucault poses an argument that he has recently returned to in his *Discipline and Punish,* namely, that incarceration with its correlative functions of classifying and organizing population is a central event in the formation of modern European society. Foucault views the creation of a labor force, the impact of economic crises (specifically persistent unemployment and shortages of money in the early stages of capitalist accumulation), the residues in symbolism and the social imagination of plagues and the growing awareness of a relation between population and wealth as a privileged moment in the conjuncture of discourse and social practice. Such an approach is not unique to Foucault, and one can find an important beginning in the largely neglected study *Punishment and Social Structure,* by Georg Rusche and Otto Kirchheimer. There they suggest that "the essence of the houses of correction were that they combined the principles of the poorhouse, the workhouse and the penal institution. Their aim was to make the labor power of unwilling people socially useful." However, Rusche and Kirchheimer were mainly concerned with opposing certain idealist theories of crime and punishment by stressing (in line with the two points introducing this discussion): "Every system of production tends to discover punishments that correspond to its productive relationships. It is thus necessary to investigate the origin and fate of penal systems, the use or avoidance of specific punishments and the intensity of penal practices as they are determined by social forces, above all by economic and fiscal forces."[14] Foucault, on the other hand, is less certain that there will be an immediate relation between, for example, mercantilism and the workhouse, or that we should approach these relations under the model of correspondence or causality.

One of the original aspects of confinement, as described in Foucault's work, is that it functioned as a control over and eventual classification of a heterogeneous and undifferentiated population of vagrants, lepers, criminals, unemployed and orphans. These populations, without social moorings, were made mobile by such economic developments as labor shortages, laws against begging, and a persistent fall in wages. But the combination of manufacturing and correction that occurs in the original houses of correction is for Foucault much more than an economic event. There are in these procedures moments of economics and morality, of symbolism and materiality that are inextricable; forming a link between the possibility for a new field of knowledge, a knowable "man" and the correlative of such analytic investment, namely, domination and increased control over individuals and populations. A relation of knowledge-power is revealed in these social institutions, a relation that, at least for Foucault, will characterize in an essential fashion European society. The following quotes come from the chapter "Le Grand Renfermement": "Measured by their functional value, the creation of the houses of correction can be regarded as a failure... a transitory and ineffectual remedy, a social precaution clumsily formulated by a nascent industrialization. And yet, in this very failure, the classical period

13. Foucault, "Nietzsche, Marx, Freud," *Cahier de Royamont Philosophie,* 6 (Paris, 1967), p. 191.

14. Rusche and Kirchheimer, *Punishment and Social Structure* (New York, 1939), p. 5.

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conducted an irreducible experiment. What appears to us today as a clumsy dialectic of prices and production then possessed its real meaning as a certain ethical consciousness of labor.... Labor's effectiveness was acknowledged because it was based on an ethical transcendence."

"In fact, the relation between the practice of confinement and the insistence upon work is not defined by economic conditions. Far from it. A moral perception sustains and animates it."

"An important phenomenon, this invention of a site of constraint, where morality castigates by means of administrative enforcement. For the first time, institutions of morality were established in which an astonishing synthesis of moral obligation and civil law was effected."

"But in this great confinment of the classical age, the essential thing—and the new event—is that men were confined in cities of pure morality, where the law that should reign in the hearts of all was applied without compromise, without concession, in the rigorous forms of physical constraint. Morality permitted itself to be administered like trade and commerce."[15]

The first thing to note is the implication in the kind of phrase, "It was in a certain experience of labor that an indissociably economic and moral demand for confinement was formulated." The "indissociable" element here is that all social practices are already signs, already interpreted, and therefore no "material" level—e.g., economic and fiscal—exists beneath various cultural expressions or representations. Confinement is not standing for something in the economic sphere. It is precisely such a logic of representation that lies behind the reified base-superstructure orthodoxy. For Foucault, the point is that the activity of labor, the images and symbols formed in a society to deal with disease, plague or social exclusion, for example, the legal structure and even the quasi-scientific discourses surrounding penology, wealth or population; all these are equally open to the procedure of interpretation, none has any deeper weight or priority. They do not constitute some qualitatively distinct order, are not the "cultural" representations of some "other reality" and are not in a hierarchical relation of correspondence or causality—to say nothing of being conceived as the difference between the real and the unreal. Productive forces, legal relations, discourses, punishments, are not the expressions but the imposition of complexes of knowledge and power: "But we can surely accept the general proposition that, in our societies, the systems of punishment are to be situated in a certain 'political economy' of the body: even if they do not make use of violent and bloody punishment, even when they use 'lenient' methods involving confinment or correction, it is always the body that is at issue—the body and its forces, their utility and their docility, their distribution and their submission.... Power relations have an immediate hold on it [the body]; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs. This political investment of the body is bound up, in accordance with complex reciprocal relations, with its economic use; it is largely as a force of production that the body is invested with relations of power and domination; but, on the other hand, its constitution as labor power is *possible* only if it is caught up in a system of subjugation."[16]

As we will see, the relation between utility and subjugation—much like the connection between the ability to know or classify and the ability to dominate and control—involves analyses that Foucault feels to have been ignored or, what is worse,

15. *Folie et Déraison: Histoire de la Folie à l'âge classique* (Paris, 1961), pp. 88-92.
16. *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 25-26.

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reproduced within radical theories in the Marxist and Freudian traditions.

For Foucault, Marxism has too readily assumed that power functions in ways identical with the functioning of economic interest. At the same time, Marxism has appropriated the model of a "scientific discourse" without reflecting upon how power is produced and reproduced in theoretical formulations themselves. There is the suggestion, in very inadequate terms for Foucault, of such problems under the general heading of "ideology"—or better, in certain images in Marx of resistance, critique, *camera obscura*, fetishism. Foucault has suggested in *Discipline and Punish* that we examine how a certain knowledge emerges—what he calls the political technology of the body—requiring a level of analysis between that of taking the body as a biological given and making it identical with the institutions that surround it. In Foucault's line of argument, it is this complex subjugation and molding of the body that is the precondition for the useful body of labor-power and the calculable body of systematic consumption: "Now the study of this microphysics presupposes: that the power exercised on the body is conceived not as a property but as a strategy, that its effects of domination are attributed not to 'appropriation' but to dispositions, maneuvers, tactics, techniques, functionings, that one should decipher it in a network of relations, constantly in tension, in activity, rather than a privilege that one might possess, that one should take as its model a perpetual battle rather than a contract.... In short, this power is exercised rather than possessed.... Furthermore, power is not exercised simply as an obligation or a prohibition on those who 'do not have it;' it invests them, and is *transmitted by them and through them*...."[17]

This rejection of an economistic and contract view of power relations also raises the aspect of *internalization*, or rather *expansion of control*, over the entire reproduction of the subject rather than only the direct laboring process. This criticism has, of course, appeared in the anti-orthodox traditions within Marxism. What Foucault has been able to show is not only that the labor process has ceased to be externally or violently imposed—nor is its dynamic one of the degradation of the laborer through economic crises—but in addition this growing leniency of self-imposition of power occurs primarily outside of the wage-labor relations. The thesis of *Discipline and Punish,* but of course running through all of Foucault's work, is that repression, whether that be in crime, punishment or labor, *has given way* to placing the body within networks in which curing, training, educating and punishing are indistinguishable—in which they coincide in a matrix of discipline: "But in its function, the power to punish is not essentially different from that of curing or educating. It receives from them, and from their lesser, smaller tasks, a sanction from below; but one that is no less important for that, since it is a sanction of technique and rationality. The carceral 'naturalizes' the legal power to punish, as it 'legalizes' the technical power to discipline. In thus homogenizing them, effacing what may be violent in one and arbitrary in the other, attenuating the effects of revolt that they may both arouse, thus depriving excess in either of any purpose, circulating the same mechanical, calculated and discrete methods from one to the other, the carceral makes it possible to carry out that great 'economy' of power."[18]

Discipline and Punish is concerned with the transition between three social practices of the power to punish. First, the public torture spectacle of the late middle ages with its pure excess of terror and violence—the literal writing of the law on the body of the condemned. This ceremonial triumph of sovereignty over its enemies is gradually

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 303.

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effaced by enlightenment reformism with its attack on the arbitrary and excessive power of personal will and the consequent violation of human rights. The model of the contract produces a legal limit to the power of punishment. In it, the juridical subject can only be brought back into the social pact or finally killed as an enemy of the entire society—however a death of rational necessity, not theatrical terror.

This notion of reform, with its rejection of physical pain, intends to focus on the criminal's reason and is in turn displaced by "incarceration" with the intent of producing normality or adjustment through careful control over behavior. This stage, for Foucault, is distilled in the image of Bentham's *Panopticon*, an architectural metaphor for the theoretical and practical achievement of total suveillance over the subject.[19] In some sense, this is a return to the body—away from what Beccaria called the necessity to deal with the prisoner's 'soul'—but not the body to be beaten down and destroyed but the body to be machined, whose movements must be carefully recorded and controlled. A schema of individualized submission: "Broadly speaking, one might say that, in monarchical law, punishment is a ceremonial of sovereignty; it uses the ritual marks of the vengeance that it applies to the body of the condemned.... The reforming jurists, on the other hand, saw punishment as a procedure for requalifying individuals as subjects, as juridical subjects; it uses not marks, but signs, coded sets of representations...[for] the most general acceptance possible. Lastly, in the project for a prison institution that was then developing, punishment was seen as a technique for the coercion of individuals; it operated methods of training the body—not signs—by the traces it leaves, in the form of habits, in behavior."[20]

While the book is primarily concerned with laying out and analyzing these three complexes, it also raises a problem about transition. Why, Foucault asks, did institutional incarceration gain universal dominance over all other forms of punishment? Even during the "age of reform," in its reaction against medieval excess, prison was considered only one punishment among many. Why does the birth of the prison mark this total annexation of penality by incarceration? Foucault's answer is two-fold. First, there was a convergence in pedagogy among schools, hospitals, armies, etc., producing as its effect this indistinguishability between curing, training and punishing. This new form of power involves a pedagogy of molding, shaping and singularizing the treatment of behavior. Second, there was the enormous impact of the "human sciences" as a specific kind of objectification making a new knowledge-power relation possible. These answers will be very briefly considered as part of drawing out the difference with, for example, Rusche and Kirchheimer's attempt to relate the shift in the power to punish to "economic and fiscal" forces—and therefore the connection between manufacturing and correction as an effect of the creation of a labor force.

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19. Bentham's "Panopticon" was an architectural structure that he recommended for schools, factories, asylums and prisons consisting of separate cells arranged in a circle around a central observation tower. Bentham's innovation, as he saw it, was the fact that since someone in the cell could not see into the observation tower, he could never know when he was being observed—which is tantamount to perpetual observation—and since the observer was anonymous (or we might say "abstract"), it was society as a whole rather than a specific individual that kept the prisoner in line. Bentham, in praising a system of incarceration, notes its "utility" over death, which he says "incapacitates for everything" and not just for the crime. "Turning again to penitentiary punishment, and comparing the exemplification here given of the terror inspired by it...is it not, in both points of view, everything that, for the sake of all parties, one could wish for?...does it not,...exhibit that combination so desirable in every case—*utile cum ducle?* In prospect terrible, in experience tolerable?" *The Works of Jeremy Bentham* (Edinburgh, 1843), Vol. IV, p. 244.

20. *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 130-131.

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In regard to pedagogy, Foucault's point is that, starting in the late 18th century, techniques and procedures emerge for molding and training bodies in several important institutional structures: asylums, schools, clinics and armies. Thus, from the position that a man is born to be a soldier—as evidenced in his stance or bearing—the making of a soldier is specified through a memorization of motions and gestures in rituals and exercises. The automatization of habit replaces the naturalness of character: "The classical age discovered the body as object and target of power...the body that is manipulated, shaped, trained, which obeys, responds, becomes skillful, and increases its forces. The great book of *Man-the-Machine* was written simultaneously on two registers: the anatomico-metaphysical...and the technico-political register, which was constituted by a whole set of regulations and by empirical and calculated methods relating to the army, the school and the hospital.... La Mettrie's *L'Homme-machine* is both a materialist reduction of the soul and a general theory of dressage (training), at the center of which reigns the notion of 'docility,' which joins the analyzable body to the manipulable body."[21]

These ceremonies of exercise and training assure docility and utility, but also realize a surplus control. That is, they *increase* the force of the body as economic, useful and calculable while *diminishing* these same forces in terms of inculcating obedience and automatic, naturalized responses. All of this constitutes a pre-condition and *makes possible* the economic utilization of labor power while, as Foucault argues, creating a privatization and individuation suited to such totalized power relations. "Disciplinary power has for its correlative an individuality which is not only analytic and cellular, but natural and organic."

In addition, these techniques were more than a simple increase in control over difficult or dangerous bodies. Foucault's central argument is that a new field of knowledge was made possible, a new expansion of information accompanied these power relations. This analytic space of knowledge emerged and joined with the practice of discipline as it was linked, according to a theme running through all of Foucault's studies, to the "compulsory objectification" that marks the birth of the human sciences. "By solemnly inscribing offenses in the field of objects susceptible of scientific knowledge, they provide the mechanisms of legal punishment with a justifiable hold not only on offenses, but on individuals; not only on what they do, but also on what they are, will be, and may be. The additional factor of the offender's soul, which the legal system has laid hold of, is only apparently explanatory [of punishment] and limitative, and is in fact expansionist."[22]

In each sphere, the introduction and solidification of scientific discourse has the effect not of transforming a field of ideology into a field of knowledge, nor of simply introducing the "disinterested" act of observation, but of allowing such an expansion and concealment of these procedures under the guise of technique. Thus the possibility of knowing the object of the human sciences is inseparable in Foucault's treatment from what he calls "corrective individualization." There is always present together a *power relation* and *object relation*. With the added effect that in the case of the scientific discourse a power, such as punishment, is abstracted from its purely legal sphere to cover the human being as such. Thus, the resistance to power is covered over with the concepts and practices of pervasive rationalization. "Today, criminal justice functions and justifies itself only by this perpetual reference to something other than itself, by this unceasing reinscription in non-judicial systems. Its fate is to be

21. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

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redefined by knowledge. Beneath the increasing leniency of punishment, then, one may map a displacement of its point of application; and through this displacement, a whole field of recent objects, a whole new system of truth and a mass of roles hitherto unknown in the exercise of criminal justice. A corpus of knowledge, techniques, 'scientific' discourses is formed and becomes entangled with the practice of the power to punish."[23]

It is this double foundation—the juridical-scientific and the technical-disciplinary—that makes the prison appear as the obvious, immediate and "civilized" form of punishment. Prison is universalized because it is the corrective supplement in a larger enterprise of individual modification that only in part functions legally. Prison is as natural to our society as the measure of exchange.

Turning now to *La Volonté de savoir*, we are confronted with a statement of something to come, a statement difficult to evaluate in exclusion from the actual analyses. Foucault projects a five-volume study under the titles, *La chair et le corps, La croisade des enfants, La femme, la mère et l'hystérique, Les pervers*, and *Population et race*. These volumes will apparently coincide with what Foucault calls in *La Volonté de savoir* the four "strategies" organized around the knowledge and power over sexuality in European society. These are the hysterization of the body of the woman, the creation of a pedagogy on the sex of infants, the control over the procreative activities of populations and the clinical treatment of perversity. This creates the four "figures," as Foucault calls them: the hysterical woman, the masturbating child, the Malthusian couple and the perverse adult. What *La Volonté de savoir* describes is the methodological problems confronted in actually carrying out this historical study. As he says concerning his doubts about the concept of repression: "Power, in a society such as ours, is more tolerant than repressive and the critique that one does of repression can take on the air of a rupture...it will appear as a new episode in the attenuation of prohibitions or as a more hidden and discrete form of power. The doubts that I wish to raise about the repression hypothesis have as their end less the demonstration of its falsity than replacing it on a general economy of discourse on sex within modern society since the 18th century.... It is a question of determining, in its functioning and its reason, the regime of power-knowledge-pleasure that sustains the discourse on human sexuality."[24]

In emarking on a history of sexuality, Foucault explains that he found himself deeply influenced and yet forced to confront the Reichian model of the Freudian concept of repression as applied to history. The "repression hypothesis" constitutes a specific schema of the history of sexuality. First up until the beginning of the 17th century, there was a kind of pervasive non-repressed sexual practice and free and open speech—reference here is usually made to Erasmus' famous dialogue where he instructs a young man on how to get along in life, how to make love to a prostitute, etc. Beginning, however, with the end of this period and extending well into the 19th century, we have the Victorian night of sexual repression. We have then a whole complex of carefully veiled words, strictly coded rhetoric and the simultaneous presence of abstention and the secret world of the brothel.

Foucault was led through problems of evidence and more fundamental theoretical doubts to reject this nonetheless persuasive model. There is here, in Foucault's view, a specific methodological principle and explanatory hypothesis. Methodologically, the history of sexuality is approached entirely through such notions as interdiction,

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.
24. *La Volonté de savoir*, p. 19.

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censorship, suppression and prohibition. These categories are taken from the discoveries Freud made in the analysis of an individual speaking subject, even to the point of looking at the level of society for significant "slips." This identity of historical processes and the mechanisms of the individual psyche lead, of course, to the socialization of such categories as super-ego.

This method of inquiry is then linked to an explanatory hypothesis (here Reich rather than Freud), i.e., that the triumph of such a repressive regime (and the fact that it replaced a relatively sexual openness) is an effect of the development of capitalism. There are usually two reasons given. First, the need for a reproduction of the labor force requiring a rigorous coding of the conjugal family entirely around the production of children (for reasons gone into at length in *Volonté de Savoir*, Foucault feels that this fails most directly on the basis of lack of historical evidence). Second, the argument more closely associated with Reich and the Frankfurt School is that the repression of sexuality produced a kind of benefit for the exercise of political control. Such repression "disciplined" individuals by requiring that they mobilize their entire psychic structure for the internal task of suppression, thus making it unavailable and constitutionally unable to engage in rebellion and struggle.

Foucault is not suggesting that we simply take the opposite of these positions, nor that there isn't in fact a reality to the processes—specifically, we have already seen why he thinks that Reich's stress on the growth of a disciplinary practice was important. Foucault's criticism is not a simple negation of all this; rather, it is based on the recognition that the anti-repression position is becoming an integrated aspect of the functioning of late capitalism and more seriously its practice and discourse is necessarily implicated in the dominant forms of power today. In the hands of the left, such a discourse unintentionally reinforces what it aims to be replacing and thus loses all force as an assault on domination.

If repression is whatever keeps sexuality from manifesting itself in discourse or reality, Foucault suggests, on the contrary, that unless we reify a single historical moment in the "hysterical" model, then we find that the Western experience of sexuality is not the restriction of discourse but a systematic, historically changing deployment and overabundance of talking about sex. It would be the height of historical naiveté and political blindness to take the event of "more talking" as *prima facie* liberation or weakening of power. For Foucault, not only does it not signify the absence of power, but the massive proliferation of discourse on sexuality that marks the modern period, especially in its medical, judicial and professional forms, is part of a subtle and complex expansion of control over individuals that reaches a historically unprecedented level.

In these previous analyses utilizing the "repression hypothesis"—and here the Freudian and Marxist theories share a postulate—power is always taken only in the negative sense of exclusion and prohibition, as in "thou shalt not." Thus, penal law becomes the essence of the exercise of power and its central example, just as sovereignty becomes the extreme, concentrated manifestation of power in political philosophy. But for Foucault, precisely what makes the analysis of power so formidable and so difficult to struggle against and defend oneself against is that it is not just a procedure of excluding, forbidding and preventing.[25] Power invents, creates

25. "The role of interdiction was very important. But is sex first and foremost interdiction? . . . that touches the most general problem to be treated in this history of sexuality, the problem of power. In a spontaneous fashion, when one speaks of power one conceives it as law, as interdiction, as prohibition and repression: and one is baffled when the mechanisms and positive

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and produces—in one of Foucault's most characteristic positions. Power as a form of productivity *forms the subject* rather than simply imposing itself; power is desirable rather than constraining. Power is found, in other words, in the outlines of our desires, the formation of the social subject, the enunciation of discourses, as well as in objectifications, classifications, etc. Power is not a possession, not a "legal contract" but a set of strategies and tactics much larger and more complex than interdictions: "In summary, it is a matter of orienting ourselves toward a conception of power that for the privilege of law substitutes the viewpoint of objectification, for the privilege of interdiction the viewpoint of tactical efficacy, for the privilege of sovereignty the analysis of multiple and mobile fields of the relation of forces, where global effects of domination are produced—while not remaining totally stable. The strategic model [of power] rather than the model of law. That is in no way a speculative choice or a matter of theoretical preference; but because in effect it is one of the fundamental traits of Western society that relations of forces...are little by little investing their principal expression in the order of political power."[26]

Finally, the repression hypothesis assumes that the effects of such power are always misconception, non-knowledge, ignorance, blindness and false consciousness (again this is tied to Foucault's objections to the analysis of ideologies). Rather, as we have already summarized, Foucault's position is that power makes knowledge possible. Thus we must give up this assumption that knowledge means the absence of power relations. The cost of that assumption is the perpetuation of this very exercise of power operating as it does under the concealment of "disinterest" and "technical control"—the very essence of what Foucault calls the "disciplinary society."

This brings the discussion to a final point. This attack on the "repression hypothesis" is more than a theoretical issue, since it is raised in the milieu of the political function and integral importance of the therapeutic in late capitalism. Thus, the fundamental objection to this interpretation of sexuality and culture is that beyond momentary historical benefit, its repetition today produces an analysis and discourse that are authoritarian. It perpetuates the illusion that it can speak for all and, in the best liberal fashion, that the ability to speak means the absence or weakness of state power. Foucault sees the birth of the professor-analyst combination, which claims to speak for those who are silent and thus which gives the theoretician his traditional position above and beyond social control, as reintroducing ever more subtle forms of power in the absence of coercion.

I will conclude by suggesting three lines of criticism or inquiry: the problem of self-reference in the kind of analysis of discourse that Foucault does, problems in his use of the concept of power, and, connected to that, the possible weaknesses of a so-called micrological politics.

With respect to the concept of self-reference, I don't want to suggest that I disagree with the criticism and demystification that Foucault has done with regard to the obsolete view of language beneath the idea of "grounding" one's own speech. This is not the sense of self-reference at issue. Foucault has suggested that he, of all writers, should be most aware that his texts are produced out of contexts and constraints that could not be totally transparent to his own consciousness, any more than "he" is really

effects of power are followed out. A certain juridical model weighs heavily on an analysis of power giving an absolute privilege to the form of law. It will be necessary to write a history of sexuality which will not be organized around the idea of power-repression: it will be necessary to try to extricate the coercive regime from pleasure and from discourse which, rather than inhibit, constitute this complex domain which is sexuality." Foucault, *Le Monde*, Nov. 5, 1976, p. 24.

26. *La Volonté de savoir*, p. 135.

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their "author." This has led to his decentered style, anonymity within the text, and playful attitude. But in two of his major works, *La Folie et Déraison* and *The Order of Things*, one is confronted with an immanent act of reflection on the status of the work itself.[27] Specifically, *The Order of Things* leads the reader to the conclusion that he is within an *episteme* that allows one to think other *epistemes*. If we are to understand that any *episteme* is not visible to someone inside it but only visible from another or after it has passed away, then how or why is Foucault's very book possible? As Canguilhem has pointed out: "In order for the *episteme* of the classical age to have appeared as object, it was necessary to situate oneself at the point where, participating in the 19th century *episteme*, one was far enough away from the classical *episteme's* birth to see the rupture with the 18th century, and near enough to imagine that one was going to *live* another rupture, one after which Man, as Order before him, would appear as an object."[28]

The questions raised concern the nature of the rupture that allows us to think "ruptures." Does this ability to think the problem of rupture or *episteme* mean that we are in a "better," more penetrating position than a past *episteme*—the classical age, for example? Is there some kind of secret accumulation of knowledge? And if it is obvious that Foucault would reject any suggestion of continuity or accumulation of knowledge, then why do we criticize a given mode of thought? On what basis do we "condemn" a thought as trapped within a past *episteme* if that is only possible because we are caught within a present one? What Foucault has to say about the method of "effective" history with its emphasis on perspective, a more self-reflective approach to the study of discourse in general and a view of theory as "motivated," as present-centered, would all seem to be in response to this kind of questioning. This also leads into what has become a more central concern of Foucault, the connected issues of power, political strategy, and the role of theory.

There is an intensely "political" nature to Foucault's work in the fullest sense of that term. In his recent writings, he has begun to articulate what he calls a "micrological" position. In the obsessive attention to detail, to the gesture and to the complicity between individuation and conformity, he tries to draw out the possibilities of a non-totalized response to the totalization of administration in society. In a more explicit passage, Foucault argues that power relations "define innumerable points of confrontation, focuses of instability, each of which has its own risks of conflict, of struggles, and of an at least temporary inversion of the power relations. The overthrow of these 'micro-powers' does not, then, obey the law of all or nothing; it is not acquired once and for all by a new control of the apparatuses nor...a destruction of the institution."[29]

These points are certainly necessary against the many simplistic approaches to the concept of power and domination that not only treat it as something possessed and then lost but, especially within Marxism, envision an end to power as a shift in the

27. Jacques Derrida in an essay "Cogito et Histoire de la Folie" appearing in *L'Ecriture et la Différence* has criticized Foucault's study of madness for lacking a sustained theoretical reflection on how such an "archaeology of silence" is possible. Derrida argues that Foucault views the separation of reason and unreason as a localizable historical event, whereas for Derrida it is the precondition of all historicity, as well as all discourse. I have discussed at some length this exchange between Derrida and Foucault over his work in an essay "Descartes on Madness: A Conflict of Readings between Foucault and Derrida," which will appear sometime this coming year in *Journal of the History of Philosophy*.

28. Georges Canguilhem, "Mort de l'homme, ou épuisement du Cogito?" *Critique* 242 (July 1967), p. 611.

29. *Discipline and Punish*,, p. 27.

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technical control over the state apparatuses. This not only fails to grasp domination within the "technique" but of course in reality serves its concealment. The struggle is made to appear, Foucault argues, as though it is over rights or progress, over anything but the exercise of power itself. When Foucault defines a strategy of resistance to such a totalizing manifestation of homogeneity as the inversion or overthrow through *temporary* and *fragmented* conflicts, it brings us back to a familiar theme in the problem of totalized administration of society. Marcuse had argued in *One-Dimensional Man* that the precise function of such total administration was the elimination of tension, risk or conflict by being able to integrate and effectively defuse such momentary and transitory oppositions. However, Foucault stresses that the exercise of power must generate oppositions, even though such oppositions remain initially contingent. But their effects multiply and form their own "relays," and to that extent tension and opposition are a constant. There can be no "closure" in totalization for Foucault because such "integration" is merely the *form* of a knowledge-power relationship, i.e., technical disinterest.

But this positive, "spontaneous" conception of struggle needs further clarification to take it beyond a mere naive confidence and it is precisely the terms *transitoire* and *le renversement* that raise such a problem of optimism. Foucault's arguments concerning the relation between power and knowledge are a constant theme of his studies and form an important critical perspective on the Western tradition, specifically as this metaphysical tradition expresses itself in the contemporary themes of technical rationality and objectivism. It is this connection that has led Foucault to identify the human sciences as the crucial link in the control and classification of behavior that can be found in the incarceration of the mad, in the creation of clinics, in the institutionalization of schools and introduction of penal rehabilitation—a "rationalization" of power that brings it into an internal relationship with the accumulation of knowledge: "Perhaps, too, we should abandon a whole tradition that allows us to imagine that knowledge can only exist where the relations of power are suspended and that knowledge can develop only outside its injunctions, its demands and its interests.... To analyze the political investment of the body and the microphysics of power presupposes, therefore, that one abandons—where power is concerned—the violence-ideology opposition, the metaphor of property, the model of the contract or of conquest; that—where knowledge is concerned—one abandon the opposition between what is 'interested' and what is 'disinterested,' the model of knowledge and the primacy of the subject."[30]

One of the reasons that Foucault finds the correlative concepts of scientific discourse and ideology useless to his research is not only that he attacks the "integrity" of such discourses, but further that a field of knowledge is shown to have complex and unpredictable relations to other social practices—both discursive and non-discursive. However, if books such as *Birth of the Clinic* show us that the introduction of 'observation' in medicine was hardly the obvious triumph of empiricism that it seems to the historican of ideas or that between the fields of biology, economics and linguistics there have been unseen continuities and ignored discontinuities, as is shown in *The Order of Things*, can we remain satisfied with Foucault's continual reference to the power-knowledge relation? If knowledge is in such differential relations to practice, is there not every reason to conclude that similarly power represents, must represent, a fairly particular relation in each case? What is covered over by the single term power is transformations and shifts in this power-knowledge relationship, which

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

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are neither constant nor homogeneous. Therefore, the reference to "overthrow" or "reversal" in this context presupposes specifying a different relation of power and knowledge. Isn't the prerequisite of any discussion of "tactics"—or micro-strategies—a specification of what kind or kinds of power-knowledge relations could overthrow a microphysics of control without ending up as a mere regression or duplication of the relationship? This can only be the content of Foucault's criticism directed at political groups that underestimate the topic of power or substitute for power rights, injustice or progress, thereby perpetuating their domination by accepting the macro-strategy of their opponents.

Robert D'Amico

Ralph Miliband. *Marxism and Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977. 199 pages.

In the last decade, it has become something of a cliché to note that Marxism lacks a theory of politics. As Jürgen Habermas said more than 15 years ago: "Due to the introduction of the superstructure into the base itself, the classical dependency relationship of politics to the economy was disrupted."[1] Similar theses have taken a variety of forms. For some, the inadequacy of Marxist political theory is the result of recent developments, particularly the appearance of the welfare state in place of the watchdog state; the novel political arrangements characterizing this new historical epoch require a new theory of the state. For others, the limits of Marxist political thought are most clearly traced by its inability to explain and criticize the bureaucratic forms of domination found in avowedly communist regimes; this situation, it is said, requires opening a new discourse on a dimension Marxists have previously slighted, namely, the "political."[2] Finally, there are a few who would argue that Marxism *never* had an adequate theory of politics, for reasons inherent in the logic of Marx's original thinking; since I share this perspective, it will be detailed below.

The recent literature on the issue of Marxism and politics has clearly enlarged our udnerstanding of the subject. It is therefore with some anticipation that one turns to Ralph Miliband's *Marxism and Politics*. The book has added interest since it inaugurates the Oxford "Marxist Introductions," a new series, edited by Raymond Williams and Steven Lukes, intended to "discuss the relevance of Marxism to the intellectual discipline concerned."

Miliband seems eminently qualified to fill this intention. A historian of the British Labor Party as well as a sociologist of "the state in capitalist society," he has also shown an admirably undogmatic way with Marx's original texts. He brings to his task an uncluttered prose style as well as an attractive commitment to revitalizing Marxist

1. Jürgen Habermas, "Between Philosophy and Science: Marxism as Critique," in *Theory and Practice*, trans. John Viertel (Boston, 1973), p. 237.

2. See, e.g., Dick Howard, *The Marxian Legacy* (New York, 1977), esp. Chapter 10, "Ontology and the Political Project: Cornelius Castoriadis."

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theory. The range of his interests enables him in the present book to include a discussion of the contemporary state in communist and third-world countries, as well as a more theoretical analysis of Marx, Engels and Lenin. Although he exhibits a healthy does of British skepticism, Miliband remains fundamentally committed to the Marxist project. He is in a good position to offer a sympathetic reading.

The book he has written should indeed prove useful for students first delving into the mysteries of Marxist politics. But its utility is unfortunately vitiated by its failure to fulfill the other professed aims of the Oxford Marxist Introductions: to develop a "Marxist theory" of a discipline, and to "make an original contribution to it."

Part of the problem is Miliband's unruffled equanimity, even when facing the most tragic aspects of the Marxist experience. Often he will raise hard issues only to gloss over them. Although it is his style to confess frankly that "ruthless repression" has gone on " 'under the banner' of Marxism," he is also quick to add that "there is no warrant for the view that such repression is somehow inscribed in the nature of Marxism" (64).[3] The reader may well be forgiven for wondering whether the repeated recourse to repression by Marxist regimes has been purely coincidental, then. Such defenses of a pure Marxism have the implausibility inherent in selectively dissociating a worldly doctrine from any unpleasant embodiments. It is, in any case, an approach that relaxes most of the significant tensions within a movement premised, for better or worse, on the unity of theory and practice.

Another problem is Miliband's penchant for stating iconoclastic caveats as a prelude to defending something close to the orthodox Marxist position. For example, in the midst of displaying his distance from orthodoxy by discussing the "cultural" aspects of bourgeois hegemony, he announces that "whatever else the immense output of the mass media is intended to achieve, it is *also* intended to help prevent the development of class consciousness in the working class, and to reduce as much as possible any hankering it might have for a radical alternative to capitalism" (50). While his phrasing may simply be sloppy here, it is nevertheless hard to credit the image evoked, of media mogul Robert Stigwood, say, sitting in a Manhattan suite with the Bee Gees, plotting the ways their music for *Saturday Night Fever* will befuddle strapping young proles hankering for communism. (Elsewhere, Miliband reassures us that "a strict reading of the record, both of capitalism and of the working class, suggests that the expectation of growing development in the working class...of a will for radical change is not in the least unreasonable or 'metaphysical' " (41).

Miliband's strengths and weaknesses are evident in his book's longest chapter, on the Marxist theory of the state. Our understanding of this theory has been modified by recent accounts of Marx's ideas on the subject. For example, Richard N. Hunt has shown that Marx and Engels held two divergent views of the state.[4] In his 1843 critique of Hegel, as well as in his accounts of Bonapartism and the Asiatic mode of production, Marx developed a theory of the "parasitic" state, portraying government as a stifling encumbrance on civil society and the bureaucracy as a caste pursuing its *own* narrow interests. Engels, in the meantime, had developed the more widely known theory of the "instrumental" state, portraying gtovernment as a pliable vehicle for rule by the dominant social class; thus, the modern parliament was merely an executive committee of the bourgeoisie. Both of these theories were later used by Marx and Engels. This in turn has prompted some discussion about whether the two models are

3. All pages numbers in parentheses refer to Miliband's *Marxism and Politics*.

4. See Richard N. Hunt, *The Political Ideas of Marx and Engels* (Pittsburgh, 1974), esp. pp. 124-131.

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actually compatible, and whether one or the other is more appropriate for describing the state in contemporary capitalist societies.

At the outset of his chapter, Miliband raises problems surrounding Marxist theories of the state. He points out the difficulties with each of the three standard ways orthodox Marxists have argued that the state is in fact an instrument of the ruling class. (1) Although the personnel of the state often are drawn from the upper class, a correlation between the rulers of economic wealth and the political elite is not sufficient by itself to demonstrate a class bias in public policy. (2) Similarly, while it is not difficult to show the influence of corporate interests on legislation, the very need to mobilize such pressure (through lobbying, perks, bribes and the likes) suggests that the state does not automatically function as an instrument of the ruling class. (3) Finally, despite the important structural constraints imposed on public policy so long as it is formulated within capitalist relations of production, the uncertainty of policy outcomes indicated by the struggle for influence and power within the state implies that the impact of these structural factors depends on who exercises power and to what ends. (To claim that the state in capitalist society is *by its structure* and quite independently of its personnel and their professed policy an instrument of ruling class domination either uses a questionable methodology to define the problem out of existence or begs all the interesting issues of precisely how the relations of production inform political policies. To this extent, Miliband's critique of Nicos Poulantzas seems to me entirely justified.)

Yet, having thus questioned each of the three most plausible interpretations of what is meant by calling the state an instrument of class rule, Miliband proceeds to discard the alternative theory found in Marx, namely the idea of the parasitic state, focusing on an executive that is "relatively autonomous" and a bureaucracy that pursues its own caste interest. According to Miliband, this "theorization of the relative autonomy of the state is, in class terms, . . . evidently inadequate and indeed fairly misleading. . . . The relative independence of the state does not reduce its class character: on the contrary, its relative independence makes it *possible* for the state to play its class role in an appropriately flexible manner" (87). He thus advocates a modest version of the instrumental model that respects the "relative autonomy" of the state. He even implies that the various objections to such a theory only show that "the relation of the 'ruling class' to the state is always and in all circumstances *bound* to be problematical" (68). An honest Marxism will simply admit as much, rather than papering over the problems with rigid theories.

This all sounds suspiciously as if Miliband had decided in advance that the state in capitalist society had, virtually by Marxist definition, to be, more or less autonomously and however problematically, an instrument of class rule. The suspicion that he has made short shrift of a challenging theoretical alternative becomes a virtual certainty when one turns to his discussion of socialist and third world states. Since he feels that the state in these countries exhibits "a very high degree of autonomy," Miliband in effect rehabilitates the theory of the parasitic state. In third world countries, "those people who occupy the leading positions in the state system will use their power, *inter alia*, to advance their own economic interests, and the economic interests of their families, friends and followers or clients" (108). Where he imputes a lust for booty to third world politicians, Miliband finds a lust for power among communists. The upshot of such considerations is that the state in these countries "is the instrument of no. . . group or class; the collectivist character of the society precludes it from being such an instrument. . . . Instead, the state may be taken to 'represent' the collectivist

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society or system itself, and to have as its function the service of its needs as these are perceived and defined by those who control the state" (112).

Miliband's formulations make some sense. But it is hard on this account to see what distinguishes the capitalist from the collectivist state. After all, do not politicians in America seek money and power? Does not the American state represent the values embodied in the whole "society or system itself," as defined by those with political power? Does not this state attempt to service the needs of the system as perceived by those in power? And would not something more like Marx's theory of the parasitic state facilitate elaborating these observations? Here as elsewhere, Miliband entertains objections and alternatives, only to reaffirm a "sensibly" patched-up version of orthodoxy.

But the most disappointing aspect of *Marxism and Politics* involves Miliband's vague conception of political theory. Throughout, he is at pains to stress the need for "adequately theorizing" the state. In his introduction, he even attempts to suggest why the political theory of Marxism has remained relatively undeveloped. No doubt he is right to stress the factors he does: Marx's holism, which makes any treatment of politics separate from the economy appear dubious; Marx's notorious metaphor of base and superstructure, which suggests that political institutions are epiphenomenal and derivative in relation to any given mode of production; and Marx's emphasis on *human* emancipation, which he carefully distinguished from an emancipation that remained merely political.

Miliband falters, however, when he comes to consider one final reason why Marxism might lack an adequate theory of the state: namely, that Marx himself had no political theory, that "whatever the contribution of Marxism may be in other areas of thought, it has little to contribute to this one" (13). Here he criticizes Lucio Colletti, who has argued that "so far as 'political' theory in the strict sense is concerned, Marx and Lenin have added nothing to Rousseau, except for the analysis (which of course is rather important) of the 'economic basis' for the withering away of the state."[5] By setting forth the elements of a Marxist "political analysis" in his own book, Miliband believes he has refuted Colletti's claim in the most effective way possible.

He has missed the point. When Colletti refers to " 'political' theory in the strict sense," he has in mind that strain of classical and modern thought that seeks to frame the *principles* of politics. Miliband, by contrast, spends most of his book talking either about Marx's *analytic* political theory—the explanations, accounts and models he gives of contemporary political phenomena—or about Marx's *strategic* political theory—the tactical role he grants political parties and the state, particularly in the transition to communism. Obviously, Marx developed an analysis of the modern state, and devoted some thought to the strategic importance of politics: the adequacy of these ideas is not at issue here. But did Marx ever admit the importance of reflecting on political principles? Did he care about the form of politics in a free society? To these questions, I believe the answer is no. Marxism lacks a coherent account of political principles. "In the strict sense," Marx had *no* political theory.

Before proceeding, it will help to clarify the notion of "political principles." By "principle," I mean a law or standard intended as a ground for judgment and a guide for action. Such principles need not be regarded as eternal verities. For example, the principles of political order defended by Hegel—liberty, equality and the organic

5. Lucio Colletti, "Rousseau as Critic of Civil Society," in *From Rousseau to Lenin*, trans. John Merrington and Judith White (London, 1972), p. 185.

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articulation of community through corporations within the state—gain their element of actuality only as the result of a long historical development. In the same sense, Marx himself adhered to a set of historically rooted *social* principles: communism *in principle* requires the abolition of capitalist relations of production, even though the possibility of this abolition is itself a historical product, not a timeless imperative.

It is also worth noting that the analytic, strategic and "principled" aspects of political theory may be internally related. Thus Hegel claims to unfold his principles through an analysis of given institutions. Similarly, a sense of principles can focus the analysis as well as evaluation of contemporary institutions by defining what aspects are essential to investigate. Finally, if one adheres to a set of political principles as part of the "ultimate goal" one seeks, these principles are bound to influence the range of strategies considered appropriate.

Indeed, without *some* sense of political principles, analytic political theory becomes at best a question of heuristic adequacy (or, for some, nomological accuracy), while strategic theory runs the risk of opportunism, with success the only relevant criterion. To abandon reflection on principles is also, in effect, to limit the scope of imagination. For Marxists, the result has been a certain timidity and confusion about developing alternatives to given political institutions, as well as a readiness to justify virtually any political strategy that promises to bring victory (however that may be defined).

Miliband himself deplores the terrorism and despotism that have overtaken some communist revolutions. He ardently defends a democratic socialism. "The civic freedoms which, however inadequately and precariously, form part of bourgeois democracy are the product of centuries of unremitting popular struggles. The task of Marxist politics is to defend these freedoms; and to make possible their extension and enlargement by the removal of their class boundaries" (189-90). Yet this phrasing betrays the extent to which a Marxist such as Miliband finds himself in the position of either accepting (defending and extending) or rejecting ("smashing," as Lenin might say) *liberal* political principles, for want of having any independent perspective. The same lack shows in Miliband's assumption of the modern nation-state as the unsurpassable political framework for socialist thought. "Where power has been seized, revolutionaries have to create a strong state in place of the old if their revolution is to survive and begin to redeem its promise and purpose" (181). How he proposes to reconcile democracy, civil liberties and a "strong" revolutionary state remains unclear.

The questions raised by Miliband's book are symptomatic of larger problems. They suggest that the status of political principles in Marxism needs to be re-examined. What (if any) political institutions are essential in a free society?

In this respect, a fresh reading of Marx is crucial. To avert misunderstanding, let me be clear: Marx's *strategic* commitment to a radical form of democracy is not in question. Evidence of this commitment can be found in his 1843 defense of "true democracy," in his continuing demands for universal suffrage, in his elegy for the Paris Commune of 1871.[6] On the other hand, whether Marx himself after 1843 ever defended democracy *in principle* is highly debatable.

The implications of such doubts can be explored by considering two of Marx's texts, one well known, the other relatively obscure. I have in mind *The Civil War in France* and "Marginal Notes on the King of Prussia and Social Reform."

6. The skeptical are referred to Hunt, *op.cit.*,; Hal Draper, "Marx on Democratic Forms of Government," in Ralph Miliband and John Saville, eds., *The Socialist Register 1974* (London, 1974); and Shlomo Avineri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx* (Cambridge, 1968).

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The "Marginal Notes" date from 1844, at a time when Marx was still planning a *Critique of Politics and Political Economy*. They were written several months after the more familiar essays on Hegel and on the Jewish question, published in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* in February 1844. In these essays as well as in his 1843 manuscripts criticizing Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, Marx had already pointed out the limits of political emancipation. It was "indeed a great step forward," but it was not "the final form of universal human emancipation." Only when "the real, individual man has taken back into himself the abstract citizen, and in his everyday life, his individual work, and his individual relationships has become a *species-being*, only when he has recognized his own powers as *social* powers so that social force is no longer separated from his as *political* power, only then is human emancipation complete."[7] The importance of the "Marginal Notes" derives in part from their clarification of the value Marx ascribed to a social, as opposed to a political, revolution.

Marx's essay was prompted by an article Arnold Ruge had published, under the misleading pseudonym "The Prussian," for *Vorwärts*, a new German emigré paper printed in Paris. "The Prussian" had ridiculed the illiterate character of the German working-class movement and had attacked the kinds of socialist reforms favored by Louis Blanc in France. After calling for a strong political organization and commending the virtues of political education, Ruge suggested that the German proletariat would most benefit from benevolent educational reforms undertaken by the king. Marx, fearful that he might be mistaken for "The Prussian," wrote a reply that was published in August in *Vorwärts*.

Two aspects of Marx's response are of interest. In the first place, he asserted that enlightenment need not be imported into the working class. The German proletariat had a spontaneous grasp of social reality and already had a shrewder sense of class interest and political forces than "The Prussian."

More importantly for the present problem, Marx also denied that politics makes a fit vehicle for practical enlightenment, particularly when divorced from a social movement such as that of the German proletariat. Here Marx went beyond his earlier essays, by disputing the value of political emancipation, even as a stage in a more general human emancipation. He gives several reasons for his growing skepticism. For one, he charges that political parties are more concerned with gaining power than transforming it, and hence are more concerned with currying favor than with educating citizens. Nor should this surprise us. Since the state exists principally to mediate the class conflicts characteristic of civil society, it is senseless to expect the state to educate citizens or to reform society. Real reforms would spell unemployment for the functionaries of the state, who therefore have a vested interest in maintaining the bureaucracy. (Note Marx's use here of the "parasitic" state model.) The best that radical politicians will manage is to replace one set of bureaucrats with another, without, however, eliminating the alienation of the entire political apparatus from the real individuals who in fact constitute society.

Even more damaging will be the violent voluntarism fostered by an exclusively political consciousness among radicals. Since the principle of modern politics according to Marx is *will* (he cites Robespierre in this regard), a merely political awareness engenders an illusory sense of the power of human action. Politicians underestimate the limits imposed on the purest intentions, particularly the limits

7. Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works* (Moscow, 1975), Vol. 3, pp. 168, 155.

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imposed by the immanent logic of civil society. The political revolutionary thus falls prey to the chimera that a forced change in regimes can by itself surmount a suffering that is actually rooted in the relations between individuals in civil society. The ideological concomitant to this violent illusion is the fetishism of juridical forms. For the modern political mind, the ideal community sketched by a constitution of written laws replaces the real existential community among men in society—a community currently torn asunder by the ravages of industrialization and the imperatives of the marketplace. The politician is deluded. Civic harmony requires a revolution in these *social* relations, not a new set of juridical bromides.

For all these reasons, Marx concludes that politics has nothing to do with the essential spirit of the social revolution to come. A political revolution of necessity involves the willful consumption of power by one party. A social revolution, by contrast, "involves the standpoint of the *whole*, because it is a protest of man against dehumanized life even if it occurs in only *one* factory district, because it proceeds from the *standpoint* of the *single actual individual,* because the *community* against whose separation from himself the individual reacts is the *true* community of man, *human* existence."[8] In a sense, Marx here abolishes the point of worrying about a political constitution by vesting the *real* constitution of a community in the spontaneous interaction of unalienated real individuals.

Yet politics of a sort remains central to the social revolution Marx foresees. That is because politics, as the public realm of will, is also an arena where class conflict may assume a self-conscious form. This kind of political struggle forces each party to clarify publicly its aims and principles; and it is only in and through this increasingly conscious struggle that the proletariat can finally become united and constitute itself as a class "for itself." On the other hand, this function of politics is purely transitional, and largely negative. Socialism requires the ultimate *"political act"* of will—revolution—only so far as it needs "*overthrow* and *dissolution.* But where its organizing activity begins, where its *own aim* and *spirit* emerge, there socialism throws the *political* hull away."[9]

In this essay, we can watch Marx's views on politics crystallize. Discarding any adherence to specific political forms in principle, Marx moves the discussion of politics onto a purely strategic plane, where considerations of power and willful conflict perforce assume priority. Political institutions *per se*—and this includes democracy as well—form no part of the ultimate goal or spirit of the communist revolution to come; neither does a respect for the political imagination embodied in modern constitutions. To be sure, politics—and specifically democracy—assume some importance as transitional elements of the communist revolution.[10] But politics here is treated

8. Marx, "Critical Marginal Notes on the Article 'The King of Prussia and Social Reform. By a Prussian,'" *Collected Works,* Vol. 3, p. 205.

9. *Ibid.,* p. 206.

10. Cf. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, Collected Works,* Vol. 3., p. 296, where he describes the second form of communism, once it has transcended the "crude communism" that "wants to disregard talent, etc., in an *arbitrary* manner." "(2) Communism (a) still political in nature—democratic or despotic; (b) with the abolition of the state, yet still incomplete, and being still affected by private property, i.e., by the estrangement of man. In both forms, communism already is aware of being reintegration or return of man to himself, the transcendence of human self-estrangement; but since it has not yet grasped the positive essence of private property, and just as little the *human* nature of need, it remains captive to it and infected by it. It has, indeed, grasped its concept, but not its essence." Form (2a) of communism may well allude to the social ideas of Babeuf and his followers.

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instrumentally, as one means, eventually to be discarded, to a higher end. Shortly after writing this essay, Marx abandoned his original plan for a *Critique of Politics and Political Economy*. Since the anatomy of civil society alone held the key to real human emancipation, a *Critique of Political Economy* would prove sufficient by itself.

The implications of Marx's perspective on politics are best brought out by *The Civil War in France*, a topical text much cherished by libertarian Marxists. The experience of the Paris Commune of 1871 prompted one important modification in Marx's strategic theory. He now believed that a social revolution could not take hold of a given state apparatus for its own purposes, but instead had to fashion a political form more appropriate for the transition to communism. The democracy advocated by the Parisians of 1871 was precisely such an appropriate form, according to Marx—and he considered this modification in his view so important that he pointed it out in a new introduction to the 1872 edition of the Communist Manifesto.

What Marx did not modify, however, was his basic outlook on politics. He continued to believe that even a democratic form of politics was at best a humane way of handling the transition to communism, replacing brute force with majority rule. In itself, though, politics was purely instrumental. While the Paris Commune thus presented an especially vivid image of the kinds of political devices useful in making the transition, its true importance was the preview it gave of the *social* powers to be unleashed in place of the state, in the social revolution to come. "It was, therefore, a Revolution not against this or that, legitimate, constitutional, republican or Imperialist form of State Power. It was a Revolution against the State itself, of this supernaturalist abortion of society, a resumption by the people for the people of its own social life." [11]

By making government officials for the first time "the responsible agents of society," the Commune constituted a novel political form capable of undertaking fundamental social change. But while the Commune "supplied the Republic with the basis of really democratic institutions,... neither cheap Government nor the 'true Republic' was its ultimate aim; they were its mere concomitants." The "true secret" of the Commune was different: "It was essentially a working-class government, the produce of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of labor."[12]

The instrumentality of Marx's conception comes out clearly at several points. "The Commune," he wrote in his first draft, "is not the social movement of the working class and therefore of a general regeneration of mankind, but the organized *means* of action." [13] Or, as he formulated the chief political lesson of the Commune in his second draft, "the political instrument of [the]...enslavement [of the working class] cannot serve as the political instrument of their emancipation."[14]

The most suitable instrument for emancipation is radical democracy, according to Marx. Through such a form of politics, the previously disenfranchised laboring masses can assume power over society. As is true of any political form according to Marx, "the

11. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Writings on the Paris Commune*, ed. Hal Draper (New York, 1971), p. 150. This is a quote from Marx's first draft. In what follows, I will cite passages from the first two drafts as well as the final text of *The Civil War in France*.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 76. Far from being a proletarian innovation, the Commune in fact can fruitfully be seen as the last efflorescence of the political imagination of the Parisian artisans, whose aims had originally been put into practice by the sans-culottes, in Year II of the French Revolution. See Stewart Edwards, *The Paris Commune 1871* (Chicago, 1971), esp. p. 360.

13. Marx and Engels, *Writings on the Paris Commune*, p. 154 (italics added).

14. *Ibid.*, p. 196.

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Commune does not [do] away with the class struggles." But it does afford "the rational medium in which that class struggle can run through its different phases in the most rational and humane way." This means that repression, while still necessary, will not be exercised by a "body superior to the society"—by a parasitic police corps, a distant bureaucracy, or an irresponsible conspiratorial elite, as the Blanquists wished—but instead by municipal councilmen "chosen by the suffrage of all citizens, responsible and revokable in short terms. The majority of that body would naturally [N.B.] consist of workmen or acknowledged representatives of the working class."[15]

In sum, Marx defended the *strategic* value of universal suffrage and democratic self-government on the Communal model of revokable councilmen elected by universal manhood suffrage. Such a political instrument limited the estrangement of political agents from society and empowered the proletariat—a class that comprised the "natural majority," according to Marx. "The great social measure of the Commune was its own working existence. Its special measures [of social legislation] could but betoken the tendency of a government of the people by the people." *In principle,* on the other hand, democracy was not the ultimate aim. "The political rule of the producer cannot coexist with the perpetuation of his social slavery. The Commune was therefore to serve as the *lever* for uprooting the economical foundation upon which rests the existence of classes, and therefore of class-rule."[16] Once the proletariat, in a final act of class-rule, used the democratic political form to dissolve capitalism and to abolish social classes, the *raison d'être* of the state—the mediation of class conflict—would disappear and, with it, the state as well.

Marx wrote in an age when universal suffrage was the exception, not the rule. While his strategic commitment to democratic forms cannot be doubted, his faith in the emancipatory social interests of the "natural majority," the proletariat, was never tested by countrary evidence of what the working class might make of universal suffrage. We do not know how Marx might have revised his estimate of democracy in the face of a different historical situation.

For a Marxist who adheres to democracy not out of principle but out of a strategic assessment of social classes and the interests they pursue, the problem can be posed bluntly. What if majority rule doesn't empower the proletariat? What if a proletarian majority fails to press for structural social reforms? What if democracy fails to serve its function as an instrument of social revolution?

Such are some of the questions posed by a purely *strategic* commitment to a democratic form of politics. If the democratic socialism valued by theorists like Ralph Miliband is going to be credibly defined and defended, we are going to need something more than a strategic theory of democracy, something more than an updated analytic theory of the state in capitalist society, something more than a well-intentioned defense of civil liberties, something more than vague invocations of "the political." We are going to need something more like a new political theory "in the strict sense"—that is, a detailed and systematic account of the specifically *political* principles appropriate to a free society. This, I think, is one of the most pressing challenges posed by the practical and theoretical experience of Marxism and politics.

James Miller

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15. *Ibid.*, pp. 199-200, 155, 154.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 76, 81.

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Richard Bernstein. *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory*. Cloth: New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $17.95. Paper: Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, $6.95. 286 plus xxiv pages.

How one evaluates Richard Bernstein's study of recent alternative approaches in political and social theory depends in part on the expectations one brings to it. It is easy to find fault with the book. Simply in terms of content, Bernstein has perhaps underestimated the literacy of his potential audience. His discussion of mainstream empirical approaches, even though it is far more even-handed than is usually the case, scarcely seems aware that in some quarters—such as those theoreticians engaged in simulation or modeling approaches—the hypothetico-deductive model has had its day.[1] His survey of the "phenomenological alternative" is concerned primarily with Alfred Schutz and barely begins to approach the subject. The work of Cicourel and Garfinkel, to mention only what has become the old guard of ethnomethodology, is only mentioned in passing. Structuralism, in any of its mutations, is completely ignored, as is the hermeneutic orientation of people such as Ricoeur and Gadamer. The discussion of ordinary language philosophy is largely restricted to Louch and Winch, although here one can turn to the fine fourth part of Bernstein's earlier *Praxis and Action*. The explanation for these omissions—that the book was written for thinkers mainly acquainted with Anglo-Saxon intellectual traditions[2]—is rather lame, sounding more like an attempt to patch up a gaping hole than an explanation of how an argument has been arranged.

If one, however, is willing to settle for something less than an encyclopedia and is more moved by a book which is lucidly written, at times ingeniously argued, and constantly interesting than by a display of breadth of the sort embodied in Radnitzky's *Contemporary Schools of Metascience*[3]—a breadth accompanied at times by utter incoherence—then the book has a good deal to recommend it. What Bernstein has done is to pull together a few important strands of contemporary discussions in the philosophy of the social sciences, strands which tend to converge in the work of Jürgen Habermas, and discuss them in a way that is coherent enough to make the book an excellent introductory text and yet at times interesting enough to provoke a more extensive discussion. My concern is with the latter aspect of the book, and after a brief survey of the terrain Bernstein covers, I will try to tease out some of the more interesting implications of the work.

1. A good introduction to the diversity of orientations huddled under the name "mainstream approaches" can be found in Paul Diesing, *Patterns of Discovery in the Social Sciences* (Chicago, 1971), a book that is not without its own add traits. Cf. the bizarre concluding sections.

2. Bernstein goes on to say, "If, for example, I were addressing myself to recent discussions of the *sciences humaines* in France, I would focus on the crosscurrents among phenomenologists, structuralists, poststructuralists, and the new advocates of a comprehensive semiotics. On the other hand, if I were writing for a German and Central European audience, I would have to examine the various forms of Marxism, hermeneutics, *Existenz* philosophy and phenomenology...," p. xx. What this seems to miss is that theories occasionally cross borders. Certainly there are structuralists on American social science faculties. Among mainstream empirical social scientists testing the waters of Marxism, Althusser and Poulantzas may be as familiar as Habermas. I have no intention of chiding Bernstein for not covering all the bases, but the explanation given here is rather misleading. A glance at the major figure discussed in the last chapter gives a better rationale for the book's organization.

3. Chicago, 1973. Radnitzky is also not without his simplifications. Popper and Habermas are shown to converge in a rather shaky argument.

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Bernstein's central thesis is that there has been a convergence of criticisms of mainstream empirical political and social theory. The objections posed by Anglo-American analytic philosophy are said to repeat certain themes explored earlier by Husserl and subsequently taken up by Schutz. It is further claimed that critical theory has undertaken a similar critique and that in Habermas' work one can find all of these themes pushed to more far-reaching results.

The discussion of mainstream empirical social science and its critics is among the strongest parts of the book. Bernstein avoids a number of dead ends which have plagued other commentators. He has little tolerance for the "immaturity" thesis advanced by proponents of empirical social science—i.e., the argument that the only thing separating the younger social sciences from their elder natural science brethren is the lead in "man-hours of research" that the latter have—or for the "impossibility" thesis, which critics of empirical social science frequently pose—i.e., that it is a priori impossible to construct an empirical science of society.[4] The immaturity thesis tends to transform serious theoretical problems into simple questions of research conduct, thus postponing inevitably the day when hard-headed empiricists will have to confront the paucity of their results with something showing more reflection than the assumption that they are laying the foundation for those who will come after. The impossibility thesis, which is usually couched in the form of a denial that human action can adequately be grasped by causal analysis, tends to ignore the fact that a good deal of human action is less fascinatingly original than action theoreticians might want to argue. Such approaches, by assuming that all social actions are intentional acts, prove inadequate in the face of phenomena such as false consciousness or the unintended consequences of social action.

Bernstein also provides one of the most clear-headed discussions of the impact of Thomas Kuhn's work on the social sciences. After a careful documentation of the way in which Kuhn's work was taken over uncritically by both proponents and opponents of the mainstream orientation (84-102), Bernstein subjects the notion of paradigm shift to a devastating criticism, arguing first that Kuhn has been unable to provide adequate criteria to distinguish "scientific paradigms from ideological paradigms" (i.e., Kuhn has not been able to distinguish rational persuasion from irrational persuasion) and second that any careful reading of Kuhn will reveal major differences between the use of paradigms in the social and natural sciences. In light of this, the obsessive calls for a "new paradigm" for social research seem to be only an alternative version of the immaturity thesis; it begs the very theoretical questions which should be confronted.

Bernstein's discussion of phenomenological approaches, as I have already suggested, is less successful. There is a discussion of Husserl's *Crisis* that never really seems to get started; a long preface dealing with Wilfred Sellars is intended to set the stage, but only serves to shorten the actual discussion of Husserl's work. Here one would think that some mention of Husserl's work in the second volume of the *Ideen* might have helped to illuminate the discussion of Husserl's approach to the social world. But before we get very far into any of the major issues Husserl poses, we are thrust into the arms of Alfred Schutz. At this point I am not sure what is served by another demonstration of Schutz's inability to deal with social reality on anything other than the level of face-to-face interactions. Certainly the best of the work now being done in

4. The discussion of the immaturity thesis is especially well done, surveying the exaggerated hopes for the discipline that seem to emerge like clockwork in APSA presidential speeches. Cf. pp. 3-42.

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ethnomethodology no longer takes Schutz as its starting point.[5] What might have been more to the point would have been a demonstration that, despite the considerable advances ethnomethodology has made beyond Schutz's perspective, it still remains tied to the contemplative model of theorizing, for which Bernstein rightly takes Schutz to task.

The discussion of critical theory will no doubt annoy those of us who have yet to succumb to the identification of critical theory solely with the work of Habermas. Adorno is mentioned a few times; nothing approaching Gillian Rose's skillful reconstruction of Adorno's notion of concept formation is ventured.[6] Horkheimer is rushed on and off stage as a prologue for the Habermas discussion, but a few serious blunders—such as the claim that Horkheimer's conception of critical theory suffers from the "key weakness" of never undertaking a "systematic attempt to refine and develop an historically relevant critique of political economy" (183)—reveal either that Bernstein has scarcely looked at the empirical work of the Frankfurt School in the 1930s and 1940s or that Grossman and Pollock were drawing salaries under false pretenses.

But the discussion of Habermas that follows makes the clumsy stage-managing forgivable. It shows us Bernstein at his best. Faced with the difficult task of saying anything critical about a theory that has been in a constant state of metamorphosis, Bernstein adopts the sensible strategy of proposing that we grant Habermas all of his arguments and then see what has been shown. If it is indeed true that all potential and actual speech presupposes an ideal speech community, a community that further presupposes the material and institutional arrangements necessary to bring it about, then Habermas has in effect proved both too much and too little. "If this line of argumentation can be justified," Bernstein observes, "then one clear consequence is that this chain of entailments is true under *any* empirical conditions.... But then it must be asked whether such a theory sheds any light on what leads human beings to overcome forms of distortive communication and work toward the conditions required for ideal speech. What seems to be lacking here is any illumination on the problem of human agency and motivation" (223). Bernstein further notes that the labelling of such concerns as "strategic" rather than "theoretical" dilemmas, "is only a name for our ignorance" (225).

This, in brief, is the material that Bernstein covers. The omissions I mentioned at the start perhaps now seem less serious. Even if he occasionally falters—as I think is particularly the case in the phenomenology section—for the most part, the book is an admirable effort. But the lessons Bernstein draws from this survey are rather odd. What I would like to do now is briefly point out a few of the problems I have with his concluding comments and suggest a few alternative lessons.

The book closes with a discussion of a "new shared awareness of the nature, aims, and tasks of social and political theory" which Bernstein sees as emerging. In a search for a way out of the dismal state of contemporary American political life and political thought, Bernstein says he has looked at "the response of those who are unwilling to submit to despair, although they are profoundly dissatisfied with the existing forms of social and political reality, as well as the typical ways we think about this reality and attempt to understand and explain it. What is required is a fundamental

5. For a very good introductory overview of ethnomethodology, showing among other things the extent to which Schutz is but one influence, cf. Jeff Coulter, "The Ethnomethodological Programme in Contemporary Sociology," *The Human Context*, VI:1 (1974), pp. 103ff.

6. Gillian Rose, "How is Critical Theory Possible?" *Political Studies*, XXIV:1, pp. 69ff.

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re-examination of the very categories by which we understand human action, and seek to relate theory to practice" (227). And, if we carry out this analysis, as indeed we seem to have done in Bernstein's book, then we will see a remarkable convergence of orientations. "In the final analysis we are not confronted with exclusive choices: *either* empirical theory *or* interpretive theory *or* critical theory. Rather, there is an internal dialectic in the restructuring of social and political theory: when we work through any one of these moments, we discover how the others are implicated. An adequate social and political theory must be *empirical, interpretive,* and *critical*" (235). Obviously, Bernstein's earlier confession (xix) that while working on the book a passage from Hegel's *Phenomenology* kept occurring to him (frightening thought!) should be taken more seriously. Internal dialectics are afoot here and what seems to be only a survey of various theoretical positions and their inadequacies is supposed to be a dialectical movement toward a more comprehensive grasp of the problem.

Suffice it to say that, faced with this, I am inclined to join those who submit to despair, although I should also note that it has never been my experience that despair was a matter of choice. "Internal dialectics" are slippery little bastards and hard to keep track of. Perhaps others can find the convergence Bernstein points to; as I look over the vague statements of Sheldon Wolin, Hanna Pitkin and Richard Zaner which close the book, I fail to find the "similar dialectical pattern" that is supposed to be exhibited behind the "manifest differences of philosophical styles" (235). But, then again, Hegel has never convinced me that substance really became subject in the end.

Rather, what seems most evident to me at the end of this often interesting survey is that we are worse off than Bernstein seems willing to admit. The model of theory-practice connection which Bernstein claims to find emergent here views theory as having the potential of bringing about the enlightenment of a rational subject. Theory interprets an empirical reality to a subject and together subject and theorist engage in a mutual critique of the obfuscations that hamper both theory and practice. As the discussion of Habermas shows, perhaps this dream is over. The honesty with which Habermas has divested himself of the assumption that social theory could embody practical intentions in a fashion paralleling that of the psychoanalytic situation should be taken more seriously. The proliferation of distinctions in Habermas' recent work, which often seem only to be desperate efforts at plugging holes in a sinking theory, have a logic of their own far more powerful than the internal dialectics of convergence. The distinctions between reflection and reconstruction, between processes of knowledge and processes of enlightenment, between logic of development and analytic post-constructions all record the severing of ties between theorist and social actor. The equation of "right thinking" and "right willing" which Horkheimer purported to see and his conception of critical theory as a process of mutual enlightenment of agents and theorists assumes that it is much easier for theory to hold up a mirror in which actors will recognize their actions than in fact seems to be the case. The metaphor of "repressed communication" assumes that discourse somehow continually struggles to break out from the fetters that bind it. Is this notion any less naive than the assumption that the working class is continually straining at the bit of revolutionary praxis, held back only by the ideological superstructure of the culture industry? Merleau-Ponty perhaps saw more clearly the depth of the problem. "Man is hidden, well hidden, and this time we must make no mistake about it: this does not mean that he is there beneath a mask, ready to appear... The situation is far more

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serious: there are no faces underneath the masks, historical man has never been human, and yet no man is alone."[7]

Michel Foucault has recently suggested an apparent paradox, which better than anything else indicates the weakness of the notions of repression and emancipation which ground the connection between theorizing and practical activity that we see in Bernstein's synthesis. There are frequent cases—the move toward a "milder" type of punishment, the loosening of taboos on discussions of sexuality—where an apparent cutting back of repression in fact increases social control. In these cases, it becomes apparent that power, in D'Amico's words, "is not just a procedure of excluding, forbidding and preventing. Power invents, creates and produces... Power as a form of productivity *forms the subject* rather than simply imposing itself, power is desirable rather than constraining."[8] Now there are, of course, ways in which a theoretician committed to the repression model can dodge the issue. It can be argued that this expression is in fact an expression of "systematically distorted communication," a case of "repressive desublimation" or perhaps even an incidence of "artificial negativity." But each of these notions seems capable of doing its work only with a considerable number of ghosts clogging up its machinery. The notion of systematically distorted communication entails, for example, the construction of a transcendental pragmatic of communication that would outline the terms of non-repressive communication. These ghost categories can exist only as "reconstructions," as analytic categories employed by the theoretician to assure himself that the theory indeed does still embody practical intentions. But, as Bernstein's argument if not his conclusions suggests, it is precisely this desperate effort to retain some assurances that theory indeed embody practical intentions that leads the theory into a dead end.

These considerations suggest that Bernstein's effort to examine "the way in which we seek to understand and explain social life" remains in a curious way the prisoner of the very "methodism" which he criticizes in the discussion of Kuhn's notion of paradigm. By concentrating on the divergences of method—whether the theorist looks at social reality as a set of objects to be manipulated, as actors with which one can communicate, or as potential agents which may be enlightened—the inquiry closes off a discussion of the sort Foucault has proposed as a way of understanding the connections between knowledge and power. We must not think simply in terms of a "scientistic misunderstanding" that imposes categories on agents, rather what would be required would be a careful investigation of the interconnections between the categories with which knowledge divides up segments of reality, the institutions that support both this knowledge and its distinctions, and the power relations that result. The problem with an approach to social theory that seeks an alternative for a "technical cognitive interest" is that the alternative is liable to be as vague as its opposing term. If all that is wrong with contemporary empirical social science is that it "treats subjects as objects," then of course the role of an emancipatory theory is to treat "subjects as subjects." What this could possibly mean, however, other than "free and open discourse" or some other equally vague notion, is anyone's guess. By attaining a more detailed understanding of what Foucault has termed the "microphysics of

7. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, trans. Richard C. McCleary (Evanston, Ill., 1964), pp. 33-34.

8. Cf. Robert D'Amico's review in this issue, originally presented at the 1977 meetings of the Southwest Political Science Association. Cf. also the fine new collection of Foucault's essays, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, trans. by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, N.Y., 1977).

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power," it might be possible to understand both repression and emancipation in more concrete and politically relevant ways. But a social theory capable of doing this would have to be reconstructed along lines that Bernstein's survey has chosen not to consider. Such an approach could not assure itself that it possessed any a priori warrants as an agent of emancipation. It would not be able to go about its work confident that it served an emancipatory interest. Its theorists might give in to despair quite a bit.

None of these comments should be seen as detracting from Bernstein's achievement. I doubt if one could find another book in the jargon-filled field of the philosophy of social sciences that performs its stated tasks as elegantly and consisely as this one. It is surely not the least of its virtues that it provokes a desire to move beyond the terms it sets. The internal dialectic stumbles onward.

James Schmidt

Dieger Senghaas. *Weltwirtschaftsordnung und Entwicklungspolitik: Plädoyer für Dissoziation.* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1977. 358 pages.*

Dieter Senghaas' recent volume on the problem of underdevelopment represents one of the few actual efforts in Western European culture of the last twenty years toward understanding the problem of underdevelopment from a progressive perspective. This exception is all the more relevant since it comes from a German scholar, i.e., an exponent of a scientific climate which is definitely conservative and often openly reactionary. Starting from the empirical discovery of the existence of an unbalanced social division of labor in the world market (pp. 15 and 25), Senghaas is led to the repudiation of the Ricardian law of comparative costs and benefits (p. 27ff). He points out that Ricardo's shortcoming lies in his static, non-dynamic discourse. In other words, Ricardo does not ask what the long term consequences would be for tropical Africa if it were to specialize in the production of coconuts, cocoa and alligator skins instead of electronic calculators. What would be the effects of such a specialization on the living standards of the masses and on the technological dependence of African countries? The consequences are notoriously disastrous. The rejection of Ricardo's law is followed by a phenomenological analysis of the actual characteristics differentiating metropolitan capitalism from peripheral capitalism.

According to Senghaas, the features of metropolitan capitalism are: a) mixed development of industry and agriculture; b) expansion of mass consumption and, therefore, development of the consumer goods industry; c) consequent development of an investment goods industry which facilitates the growth of an independent technology (pp. 34 and 36). All of which provides metropolitan capitalism with a capacity for adaptation, altogether different from that of peripheral capitalism. The latter would exhibit in turn the following stages of development: a) during the first phase, we have a development of the exports sector (agriculture and minerals); b) during the second phase we have an attempt to create an industry that would produce goods to substitute imports (this industry, however, requires foreign technology and cannot be developed because of the lack of a large absorption market); c) during the third phase, there is an effort to construct, with the help of multinational capital, an industry of luxury consumer goods for the upper class of the population, but this

*Translated by Eleni Mahaira-Odoni

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attempt also fails because of foreign dependence and the limitations of the market.

In these various phases, we note either the stagnation of non-exporting sectors or a poor interweaving of industry and agriculture. Moreover, the development of an industrial production geared to mass needs and of an autonomous technology are absent (pp. 36-41). For Senghaas, at the root of these developmental differences there is a clear structural difference between the two types of capitalism: a so-called structural homogeneity prevails in metropolitan capitalism in the sense that all sectors develop with a somewhat uniform level of profits, productivity and wages while precapitalist relations have practically disappeared. Instead, under peripheral capitalism, the economy is composed of three clearly distinct sectors in terms of the level of development, pay, productivity and profits which, similarly, are of a different nature: there is a dominant sector of a monopolistic type, a capitalist-competitive sector and a precapitalist subsistence sector. The interconnection of these three sectors to which correspond three diverse modes of production constitutes the essence of peripheral capitalism which is thus characterized by structural heterogeneity (pp. 41-8). This structural fragility of peripheral economies (where the major part of the population exists in the subsistence sector) prevents their development: the poor dynamics of the internal market creates economies geared to and dependent on foreign countries, even though this dependence changes character during the various phases of (under)development in those dependent societies (pp. 48-55). To break this dependency it is necessary to break the structural heterogeneity which causes dependency itself. Hence, it is necessary to orient production toward mass needs, to expand the market and to stimulate production by popular consumption. These items require a radical socio-political turn-about in a popular direction.

In this connection, Senghaas rejects the reformist thesis about a new world economic order which, as put forth by UNCTAD, does not actually question the real causes of underdevelopment: it only voices the positions of third world privileged elites who aim at improving their own position—within a system they actually accept—and who do not want any real change that might place the masses and their needs at the forefront (pp. 60ff; 205-222). Having stated this in the "Introduction," the volume then branches out in various lucidly written chapters where the opening theses are gradually demonstrated. There is a brief chapter (pp. 75-88) dedicated to the thought of Friedrich List, who was one of the precursors of theories of autonomous (though not autarchic) development separate from the world market and from its unequal division of labor. List criticized Ricardo in the name of the German bourgeoisie's interests in growth. Today, notes Senghaas, there is no third world List because in those countries there is no bourgeoisie interested in autonomous development. Yet the theory of a "self-centered" development could well be appropriated by the masses.

The next two chapters are decisive to the book's structure: they compare Japan's and Brazil's development model. In the first case, Japan's exceptional capability to avoid erosion from the prevailing imperialist powers has allowed a development different from the classical English one (on p. 100 it is stressed that sector A development—investment goods—precedes that of sector B, thus reversing classical English priorities). Still, this is an autonomous development that leads to a parallel growth in agriculture to complement that of industry (p. 106), while there is also growth in consumption and in the domestic market (pp. 104-6), even though the standards of living of the masses have always been very low. This development did not denote autarchy but, instead, autonomy, for it is inconceivable apart from a dialectical relation with world economy—it will suffice here to think back to the

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Japanese's rapid absorption of Western science and technology (pp. 108-113). Though the costs of the Japanese model were high—nationalism, militarism, poor evolution of democracy (pp. 113-5)—it still remains a notable case of self-centered development.

Radically different is the course of Brazil, whose economy was born as a colonial economy within a world market just beginning to take shape. Brazil undergoes all three phases of backward countries: that of exporting agricultural-mineral goods, that of subsistence industrialization (1930-55) and that of development in the industrial luxury goods sector (from 1955 to now). The first phase features all the characteristics of the colonial phases, i.e., development of exporting sectors alone with a general stagnation in other sectors and a pronounced dependence on foreign countries (pp. 120-4). The second phase is accompanied by a great crisis and the attenuation of pressure from the metropolis—weakened by that very crisis. There is then an attempt to substitute imported goods (i.e., to produce them locally). But these are luxury goods so that they have a limited market. Thus, development flounders. The third phase is really an extension of the second one with a much more massive commitment. Brazil's economy runs up against a balance of payments deficit: the dynamic sector is in the hands of foreign monopolies that take over sectors with higher rates of profit, and export to the metropolis profits earned in Brazil since the limited size of the market does not allow for local reinvestment (pp. 130-9).

For these reasons the end of the Brazilian economic miracle cannot be considered a consequence of the sheiks' increase of the price of oil: the Brazilian "colossus" was already seriously sick. Senghaas resumes and accepts Aloysio Biondi's analysis which underscores the conveniently apologetic nature of this thesis: the oil crisis has simply rendered evident the intrinsic fragility of the Brazilian model (pp. 139-145). However, according to Senghaas, Biondi is wrong to propose a metropolitan model of capitalism for Brazil. This model cannot be transplanted because the structures of dependence are rooted and internally "structural" to the logic of the world capitalist market. Thus, it is necessary to break with its logic and with capitalism (pp. 146-52).

As the volume proceeds, the studious German denounces as "ideological" proposals for Third World industrialization by transferring there highly labor-intensive industries. Pilot-industries would remain in advanced countries and would thus perpetuate a relation of dependence. Moreover, the abundance of man-power in poor countries is not a "natural" characteristic, but the consequence of their distorted development, i.e., of structural heterogeneity because of which, either the structures of underdevelopment are destroyed (and surely, some industry that would not greatly expand the market while employing low-wage labor-power would not be enough), or nothing changes (pp. 173-81). Analogous reformist theses concerning agriculture, as proposed by the World Bank, are also refuted (pp. 196-201). The World Bank deceives itself (or pretends to be deceiving itself) by believing in the possibility of development without questioning the actual structure of socio-economic relations in the Third World.

The penultimate chapter discusses the problem of militarization in the Third World, which, for Senghaas, clearly exhibits the same features of economic dependence. The commercial military budget and the effort toward military industrialization in Third World countries reproduce in a striking manner the economic dependence discernible in other sectors (pp. 240-6). Thus, they exchange raw materials or low-technology goods in order to get high-technology, sophisticated weapons. Or else, they try to acquire Western technology and, with the cooperation in this sector of Western enterprises (which grant them patents and licences), they create

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modern war industries that could never establish themselves on their own. In the last chapter, Senghaas draws conclusions from his work by reiterating the necessity for self-centered development, i.e., founded on the needs of the masses (the features of such a development are indicated on p. 266). As a preliminary step in this direction, a radical shift of power to the masses becomes necessary. The political management of this process must be delegated to the masses non-bureaucratically and should use planning that could stimulate initiatives from below but in the framework of clear global choices and capable of making a balanced use of combined advanced and traditional technologies (pp. 273-6). In addition, this course would be hardly conceivable without a restructuring of the world economy which would break the vertical dependence of Third World countries from rich ones (poor countries, as is well-known, trade mainly with rich ones and little among themselves) and would create relations of horizontal cooperation in the Third World (pp. 279-83).

The author's argument is extremely interesting, yet it raises a number of serious questions. First of all, there is the theory of structural heterogeneity that Senghaas picks up from Armando Cordova and the Caracas school. Elsewhere,[1] I have criticized this theory and Senghaas does not add much to it. The central feature of that thesis consists in considering the major part of the Third World's productive relations as non-capitalist: the majority of the population lives in the subsistence sector characterized by a non-capitalist (pre-capitalist) mode of production. The laws of (monopolistic) capital dominate the global structure of the economic system which, as we saw, is made up of three modes of production. But this domination does not prevent the great mass of the population from living at the level of pre-capitalist relations (subsistence). This implies that, however subordinate to monopolies, precapitalist relations would conserve specificity of their own and would also have their own laws (since there is talk of diverse modes of production, though of a hierarchical order—p. 41). Thus, every mode of production could have its own laws (otherwise it wouldn't make sense to speak of distinct modes of production) insofar as the relatively dominant law would be that of monopolistic capital. Now, however, Senghaas' volume (as well as other Caracas school writings) talks almost exclusively about the dynamics of monopolies in the social system, while the existence of the law of monopolies is simply taken for granted. At this point, the presence of other social precapitalist relations is reduced to a formal shell: the external (e.g., feudal) aspect of this relation becomes privileged, especially its juridico-formal character over the dynamic-economic function which is decidedly capitalist. In other words, we have precapitalist relations that function by obeying capitalist (monopolistic) laws but which remain precapitalist! A truly logical and historical absurdity. In addition, the subordination to the law of monopoly capital necessarily determines a modification of the content of the old precapitalist relation which must be adapted to the exigencies of the new system.

For example, a recent study of the agricultural subsistence economies of the Niger and the Upper Volta has shown how a large part of the production meant for direct consumption within the orbit of subsistence is instead channelled into the market (this is real anathema to the classical schema of subsistence economies). The explanation for this absurdity lies in the fact that the peasant has to pay income tax to the State in cash[2] and, hence, must reduce his consumption below subsistence. But really, who is

1. See, A. Carlo, *Sociologia dell' imperialismo*, (Milano, 1976), part II.
2. See, Th. Brun, "L'Avenir du petit paysan voltaique," *Dossier Economia*. No. 5, 1977, pp. 75-6.

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forcing the State into this heavy fiscal exploitation? A comprador, bureaucratic bourgeoisie which needs money to satisfy models of consumption it has borrowed from the West, in order to acquire Western commodities. The integration of the world imperialist market, through the mediation of the State, distorts the dynamics and content of the subsistence economy and the latter is unrecognizable for it has become part of the imperialist system. It should not be objected that it preserves its specificity since it is subject to the movement of capital. An economy of subsistence that no longer functions in its normal and natural mode but in a totally distorted fashion is by now something different—perhaps it is a particular part of the mode of production and of the world capitalist system which is unitary because the law of movement running various relations of production is also one.[3] But why does the capitalist system still use precapitalist relations? The reasons must be sought in the fact that in particular historical situations it may be more convenient, especially for profit purposes, to utilize precapitalist, as well as not "pure" capitalist relations (wage-labor). This is how Marx presents the case of capitalists who employ slave instead of wage-labor in the colonies, in order to maintain the rate of profit.

They too operated for profit (which is the specific law of capital) and *were* capitalists; their enterprises were undoubtedly capitalist enterprises (since they ran for profit) and, therefore, the content of labor relations was internally capitalist: it makes no sense to look for a distinction between capitalist and slave relations within this productive unity. The law unifying labor is one—profit—so that labor relations can only be homogeneous to this law.

Similar phenomena can also be found in the metropolis. A recent Canadian inquiry has shown that in Western countries there is a vast sector of "black" resident labor of 10 to 16 million people. But then, resident labor goes back to the period of transition from feudalism to (paleo)capitalism. Could we say then that Japanese electronics trusts that use it extensively are regressing partly to the period when the merchant consigned manufacturing materials to citizens? This is absurd: the relation in question is utilized in order to depress wage levels because the resident laborer is isolated and weak from a trade-unionist perspective. In other words, we are dealing here with a secondary but noticeable countertendency to the general tendency of the concentration of the working class. The resident "black" worker is actually a wage-laborer (even if at times he formally thinks of himself as a free artisan) except that this relation of precapitalist origin in used instead of the pure wage relation. Yet, the reasons for this rediscovery of resident labor are not related to its origins and are a partially integral consequence of the actual phase of capitalist development which dictates the law, the function and the content of these relations.

Moreover, this is a relation that Japanese industry undertakes for life with the labor force (it holds for the greatest part of the industrial Japanese labor force). This relation fouls up the dynamics of classical capitalism and of its labor market where the worker is free and separated from the means of production. Here instead, though based on some contract, the worker finds himself tied for life to the instrument of production—as under feudalism. Yet, no one would say that in large Japanese industries industrial relations and their content are not highly capitalist. One speaks of industrial feudalism in Japan only at the level of low quality journalism. Here is a last striking example: Nazi Germany which during the war used extensively the labor of

3. The same phenomenon occurs in South American agricultural communities based on subsistence economies but integrated with the market. Cf. R. Stavenhagen, "Les classes sociales dans les sociétés agraires," *Anthropos* (Paris, 1969), p. 299ff.

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tens of millions of slaves—prisoners from the *Lager*—on an industrial level. Would we say, with the followers of the Althusserian school, that in the big truck factory in Munich (which utilized wage relations and slave labor from Dachau) combined capitalist and slave modes of production? Again, we are faced with an absurdity since there is only one law determining the various relations of labor. The unification of the world economy brought about by capital has destroyed old precapitalist societies and, whenever it has utilized or imitated their relations, it has done so by subordinating them to this law and radically altering their content: i.e., it has integrated them into its mode of production by eliminating their precapitalist specificity.

The same holds true today for relations between monopoly capital and small competitive businesses. The latter operate according to competitive prices. In other words, when 15,000 to 30,000 small sub-contracting firms offer their goods to large customer trusts (FIAT, Ford, Siemens, Mercedes, etc.), it is clear that we have, on the one hand, tens of millions of productive units competing for possibly vital commission and, on the other, an enormous concentration of demand. In this case, given the market situation, the price of a good can only be competitive and therefore quite low. However, in acquiring investment goods (produced generally by oligopolistic sectors) small firms will have to pay high monopoly prices. Thus, there is an unequal exchange which impoverishes small enterprises: the 18th century competitive price is only an element of this exchange and it no longer characterizes the market. While in the 18th century this price served to distribute wealth and contributed to equalizing the rate of profit (which was how the law of profit operated in the competitive system), this is no longer so. Prices no longer allow an equalization of the rate of profit.[4] Hence, the old 18th century capitalist law is blocked and surviving competitive prices are subject to another law, i.e., that of unbalanced accumulation between monopolistic and "competitive" sectors. Even then, the old law of equalization operates with difficulty within relatively competitive sectors because the ideal 18th century market where productive factors could move free of great obstacles no longer exists (this is the premiss of the law of equalization of the rate of profit).[5] The three sector schema, in which each sector has a specific mode of production, must be rejected: there is only one law of movement and one mode of production, even when it makes use of various relations.

But this is not all: the theory of structural heterogeneity proposed by Senghaas relies on the homogeneity in advanced countries, i.e., in the form of a tendency toward uniformity, not just in wages but also in the levels of profit and productivity. On page 173, Senghaas tones down this claim by noting that in advanced countries there are

4. As I have stressed elsewhere, if there is equalization, it works only between monopolies and with new methods. Cf. my *Sociologia dell'imperialismo, op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

5. Let us take the example of a small textiles entrepreneur who might want to shift to another competitive branch where he knows that profits are better. To operate this reconversion he will need capital but a small enterprise, with low levels of profit and productivity and subject to unequal exchange with monopolies, does not dispose of high rates for self-financing. He would then have to resort to banks, but they only grant crumbs of credit to small firms because they prefer more solid clients—monopolies with which they are generally connected. Therefore, in the majority of cases, what is left for the small entrepreneur is to remain within his original sector and this generates the well-known phenomenon of "scarce adaptability" of small firms to market fluctuations. This sector, therefore, does not constitute an autonomous mode of production because it does not obey laws of autonomous movement (of the type of the old competition law of the equalization of the rate of profit). Instead, this sector is an integral part of the monopolistic mode of production of which it constitutes, so to speak, the "lower" part.

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more than marginal differences. But it is clear that, though they are not marginal, they are relatively secondary for Senghaas whose analysis emphasizes homogeneity as the prevailing characteristic. At this point, Senghaas' work, richly documented so far, suddenly falls into a sort of undemonstrated dogma. This does not mean that the system of advanced countries is structurally heterogeneous while that of the Third World is homogeneous, thus reversing Senghaas' thesis. It only means that the world monopoly system is homogeneous (in both advanced and backward countries) because it is dominated by one mode of production and one law (since homogeneous means unitary or ruled by the same law). Within its dynamic, however, this system produces contradictions and disequilibria as a result of the laws governing a unitary mechanism of accumulation. Hence, to structural heterogeneity, we counterpose the thesis of unbalanced homogeneity (unity).

This phenomenon of a unitary mechanism with strong disequilibria takes place both in the so-called Third World as well as in advanced countries. It is well known that, while for monopolies the rates of profit are quite high, they are depressed for small firms which, therefore, can only afford inferior wage levels.[6] This also determines a territorial disequilibrium between zones of high monopolistic concentration and those where small industry prevails. Accordingly, at the end of the 'sixties, in the six-member Common Market, the classification of 32 economic regions ranged from American to Third World wage levels. The bulk of industrial production with higher profits and technology was concentrated on barely one-sixth of the territory. Thus, disequilibria are a central—not a secondary—phenomenon of development. Yet, this cannot support a theory of structural heterogeneity but, rather, a theory of unbalanced homogeneity. For wage levels, the differences are also very clear: in May 1976, after taxes, a skilled worker earned about 461,000 lire in Amsterdam while one with similar qualifications earned about 328,000 in London and about 944,000 in Montreal. The differences are striking: homogeneity does not imply, therefore, an equalizing tendency of the rate of profit, of productivity or of wages, but only the unity of a mechanism which produces these imbalances. The difference between rich and poor countries consists in the fact that, on the average, profit levels in the former are higher (because monopolistic development is more extensive) and, as a result, give rise to a consistently disproportionate relation between the former and the latter.

Moreover, Senghaas' reconstruction of the development of capitalism in the West is problematic: the complementary development of agriculture and industry and the development of the domestic market by means of growth in popular mass consumption is extremely questionable—at least, in the classical English case to which Senghaas refers. In fact, in England the interests of profit (industry) and of rent (agriculture) were ferociously opposed. The struggle ended with the elimination of custom duties on grains in the 1840s and with the definitive victory of industrialists. Agriculture was reduced to a marginal position so that, rather than complementary, development was much more a matter of conflict. With the advent of monopolies and economic development that favors large concentrations, fragmented agriculture remained backward and subject to a colonial relation exibiting the well-known bifurcation of industrial *vs.* agricultural prices. Even U.S. agriculture, famous for its development in relation to other agricultures (but not to industry), presents a fragmented and archaic structure by comparison to industry: 55% of agricultural enterprises—often one-man farms—bring in only about $5,000 per year. Thus, development has been mixed, not

6. Cf. H. Sherman, *Stagflation*, (New York, 1976), p. 149; and J. O'Connor, *La Crisi Fiscale dello Stato* (Torino, 1977), p. 17ff.

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in the sense of complementarity and equilibrium but of underdevelopment: industry has practically eaten up agriculture.

The expansion of industrial production attributed to increases in popular mass consumption is also debatable, at least during the take-off phase of industrial capitalism in England. Hobsbawm notes that in the 1790-1850 period the standards of living for working class masses worsened. Others are less pessimistic but, as Phyllis Deane notes, no optimist can seriously question that with respect to 1780, only after 1840 there was a consistent increase in the living standards of the working class. Therefore, the development of industrial sector B must be sought elsewhere: a) foreign trade and b) increase in unproductive consumption. In this connection, Marx notes that already by the mid 1800s, there was in England a large army of workers in the service sector (tertiary)—the product of an industrial evolution that was (already then!) saving labor power as much as possible.[7]

On the other hand, in relation to the development of countries joining late in the industrial race, the interpretation of the Japanese model is contradictory. It is stressed that popular consumption increased while the mass level of living was quite low. For Senghaas, however, it seems that the first element is determining for it constitutes one of the fundamental points of self-centered development of which Japan is a case in point. Now, if industrial Japanese development favored sector A (investment goods) during the take-off phase, it is clear that the increase in consumption was perforce subordinate to that goal (which is poorly related to consumption) and, as a result, the dynamics of consumption proved slight—at least during the first phase. In this context, Maddinson notes that in the 'thirties only 60% of the Japanese GNP went to consumption while the Japanese people's ability to abstain from consumption was exceptional.[8] Consequently, the consumption increase cannot be considered a characteristic or principal element of the Japanese model.

Even the industry-agriculture relation was much more contradictory in Japan than Senghaas believes. The surplus shifted from agriculture to industry (to which he does refer) brought no adequate compensation to the former which remained even more backward. Thus, in the 1874-1913 period, agricultural production grew by 2% a year. But statistics about agriculture in the Meiji era have often been challanged. According to Yamada, the increase was 1.8% while according to Nakamura, it oscillated between .8% and 1.2% per year. In the Meiji era, industrial growth was instead estimated at 5.5% yearly, i.e., three to four times that of agriculture. In the 1913-38 period, the discrepancy grew at 1.2% for yearly agricultural growth and 7% for manufacturing growth. As in England, this unbalanced situation gave rise to conflicts in the Japanese Diet between industrialists and landowners. In this connection, Barrington Moore, Jr. writes: "The main concrete problem dividing industrialists from farmers during a great part of the modern era was the price of rice. Industrialists wanted rice to sell inexpensively for the workers and they exerted strong pressure over the government in order to prevent it from conceding heavy rice subsidies which would have primarily benefited landowners. Even though rice production per unit of cultivated land and production as a whole continued to rise, at the start of the new century Japan was no longer able to produce enough to satisfy the needs of a growing population and was forced to resort to imports. After 1925, imports amounted to something between one-sixth and one-fifth of national production and despite this,

7. Cf. K. Marx, *Il capitale, I*, (Rome, 1964), pp. 491-2.

8. Cf. A. Maddinson, *Lo Sviluppo Economico in Giappone e nell'URSS*, (Naples, 1972), pp. 52, 63, 69.

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per capita consumption continued to rise with regularity." [9]

The resulting picture, therefore, is one of conflicts in industry-agriculture relations, inadequate development of the latter which fails to meet the country's needs and a limitation of elementary consumption. Once the thesis of structural heterogeneity is rejected, we have to explain the phenomenon of underdevelopment—a problem whose explanation has already been outlined. Under the monopolistic system there are firmly differentiated levels of profit whereby the rate of profit for monopolies is higher than that for small industries or for agriculture, and there are no adequate countertendencies capable of rectifying this imbalance. Poor countries are countries where depressed activities prevail and where the rate of profit and accumulation (which conditions economic growth) is lower than average. As already mentioned, this phenomenon also exists in advanced countries where there are vast zones of underdevelopment.

This type of interpretation also explains why a kind of development comparable to the Japanese is unthinkable today. In fact, while Japan was on the road to industrial development (with the 1868 Meiji revolution), the world market was still taking shape and the preponderance of oligopolies was still to come. At the time, Western countries wishing to impose the capitalist system and its logic had to resort to military occupation, i.e., colonization. It is hard for us to imagine the transformation of India and Algeria into capitalist (underdeveloped) countries without English and French political-military penetration. Today, on the other hand, the levels of integration of world capitalist economy are such that overt colonialism is no longer necessary since monopolies can readily subordinate countries and peoples to their own interests. The case of petro-dollars is clear: the enormous sums of money gained by governments of oil-producing countries return to the metropolis in various ways (at times, petro-dollars do not leave a rich country but are simply transferred in the same New York or London bank from one account to another). This is because the most profitable of activities are concentrated in the metropolis [10] (of course, "most profitable" with respect to the depressed economic activities of oil-producing countries—with the obvious exception of oil). At this point, the ideal superstructure of this system is an efficient international monetary system rather than a colonial army. The political-military force of the metropolis remains and can be used, but it remains in the background: gone are the times of Third World global, permanent military occupation (colonialism). Thus, a country like Japan was able to trigger autonomous development thanks to the fact that the great powers had not agreed among themselves on its partition.[11] Today, this is no longer possible.

The normal case is that of Brazil. There, multinational monopolies sequester the few profitable investment opportunities (production of luxury goods) and, since other Brazilian economic activities are not very lucrative, they export locally earned profits to the metropolis. As a result, poor countries end up financing the growth of the rich.

Therefore, Senghaas' conclusions are correct: to start autonomous development one must break with the imperialist-monopolistic system and the world market, while undertaking a process of transition to socialism. Actually, Senghaas uses the concept but not the word for socialism (probably to avoid scandalizing the German academic

9. Cf. B. Moore, Jr., *Le Origini Sociali della Dittatura e della Democrazia*, (Torino, 1969), p. 323.

10. See my "The Oil Crisis and Underdevelopment" in *Telos*, n. 31, (Spring 1977), pp. 5-34.

11. As Paul Baran observes, "This was an 'extraordinarily simple and extraordinarily complex' condition of Japanese development."

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milieu where socialism is taboo). Yet, the substance of the radical transformation he indicates is clear. Our disagreement lies only in the way Senghaas proceeds to reach essentially correct conclusions.

One last remark: Senghaas observes that without a new restructuring of the world market, one that would make it possible for poor countries to cooperate among themselves, it is hard to conceive of their economic take-off. But in effect, it is impossible to believe at this stage that the majority of Third World countries could simultaneously break with imperialism and open a phase of horizontal cooperation. What is more likely is a series of ruptures distinctly gradual in time. During this phase, single countries making the break must accustom themselves to counting mainly (though not exclusively) on their own forces. The only cases of development independent of imperialism (Stalinist Russia and Maoist China) are of this type. I do not wish to deal here with the debate on the nature of these countries (for, no doubt, Stalin's USSR was not socialist). Nonetheless, these countries have demonstrated that an underdeveloped country's autonomous development is feasible in relative independence from the world market and under conditions of relative isolation.

This means that autonomous development without the horizontal cooperation Senghaas speaks of is possible and, given a situation where a rapid advance of the world revolution cannot be foreseen, it is the only conceivable course.

In conclusion, despite my many criticisms, the points of agreement with Senghaas' work outnumber those of dissent. The concrete analyses contained in the book are independent from the theory of structural heterogeneity. The sections on Brazil, on agriculture, on UNCTAD and World Bank reformism, on militarism as well as those on F. List constitute a most valid contribution for those who wish to understand modern imperialism.

Antonio Carlo

André Glucksmann. *Les Maîtres Penseurs*. Paris: Grasset, 1976. 321 pages.

In the growing literature accumulated since May 1968, the French upheaval has been interpreted essentially as a protest against the established system of authority and, in various degrees, as a rejection of rationalized organization of the social, labor and educational sectors. Some ten years later, while the psychological dynamics and inner rationality of the event remain far from clear, its brevity and its admittedly limited impact are becoming less of a mystery. For, even when pared down to the essentials of a fundamentally student-inspired insurrection against the institutions of knowledge and, therefore, doomed by the rationality of the system at large, the direction of recent French thought suggests that May fell short of its target in the intellectual climate as well: the spirit of objectivism—already rooted deeply since the early 1960s with the spread of structuralism—has proved itself resilient, all claims to the contrary notwithstanding.

On the surface, the fact that almost anybody who is somebody in the French intellectual scene has found it necessary to comment or argue about May might suggest that 1968 generated a wave of questioning of the traditional form, the content and the agents of knowledge. But actually, this is only true of intellectuals who had

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already embarked on this process of conscious introspection as a result of their long-standing theoretical and political involvement (men like C. Lefort, J.-P. Sartre, C. Castoriadis, or J. Rancière, for example). In effect, judging from the work of writers who have grown prominent in the 1970s, it becomes apparent that May 1968 has been molded into a myth which is invoked and *used* to herald some imaginary *rupture* with the past and the advent of presumably fresh, revolutionizing thought. The case of the "new philosophy" has taken such sad dimensions that the reviewer of yet another book begins to suspect that an otherwise well-deserved scathing critique might play further into the hands of an already far too successful publishing stint.

Perhaps the most troubling feeling that A. Glucksmann's *Les Maîtres penseurs* can arouse does not concern its theses—which are often laughable—or even the events it describes since they are common knowledge. Precisely insofar as it deals essentially with discourse, logos and language, its use of these on both the aesthetic and substantive levels raises disturbing doubts about the possibility of communicating ideas on some sort of intersubjectively rational basis. As Theodor Adorno's *Minima Moralia* demonstrates, the most crucial weapon of the quintessential aphorism lies in the economic use of a language capable of totalizing through its particularity the relationship it bears to spherical thought. Instead, Glucksmann's language and discourse about language betray an inability to think the world beyond the word—the sign. The distance, history and praxis separating language from thought have been collapsed into the word; the latter, robbed of the dialectical process that constitutes it as a *product*, is endowed with the mystifying powers of a *producer* of mental operations that are by force elliptical and impoverished.

Linguistic acrobatics are a matter of principle for Glucksmann: to theorize he says, is to terrorize (p. 16); "terror" and "territory" are synonymous because, according to Justinian's presumably indisputable etymology, territory means the right to terrify (p. 42)! Aiming at comprehension, i.e., at grasping the whole behind truncated language, the unsuspecting reader plunges into the first chapters on Rabelaisian satire in the hope of discerning a sense of proportion in the use of linguistic and historical analogies. No such luck. Throughout the book analogy stands for proof that power and domination disguised in the garb of logos and knowledge are, on the one hand, the final, *personal* goal of all master thinkers from Plato to Mao (p. 16-19 *et passim*); on the other hand, according to Glucksmann, words and the *text* bear a linear relationship to contemporary horrors, from concentration camps to bureaucratic homogenization, not in the sense that the Stalins and Hitlers of history have found in texts convenient justifications but because, though cognizant of their future consequences, the master thinkers did not exercise *a priori* self-censorship! (p. 39, 41, 51ff).

Stripped of their complex referrents, Rabelaisian parody and symbolism are hypostatized into verbal structures moving freely into history to be found conceptually identical, here, to Mao's "one is right to revolt," there, to orthodox Marxist sloganeering, elsewhere, to "Arbeit macht frei." All of which culminates in a grotesquely surrealistic orgy-of-food scene where the menu includes Rhine wine, good laughs, B. Russell's math concoctions, fish, the *Communist Manifesto*, Boccaccio, Aquinas, marriage, diamat, Hegel, etc., etc. (p. 27-35). Occasionally incisive remarks provide the only reason for continuing with this mess in the hope that, beyond the revolting hodgepodge, its vaguely suspected thesis will grow clearer and more substantial. The themes alluded to in the parody of Rabelais' city of the Will (Thélème) imply that by means of Hegel, Fichte, Nietzsche and Marx, the book will

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attempt to develop the historical and philosophical connections that make it possible for the search of rational and scientific knowledge to translate itself into totalitarian and or authoritarian systems of power that perpetuate domination, holocaust, tortures and exploitation in the name of Reason, Freedom, Science and the Revolution—French and Russian. In brief, however, Glucksmann's themes include only (unoriginal) descriptions of: the bureaucratic imagination, the obsession with social and revolutionary organization, the French revolution and its impact upon German idealism and the insidious penetration of the contemporary bureaucratic state into civic and private existence. Quite justifiably, his long list of scathing denunciations also comprises: the personality cult, the "physical" and metaphysical use of Marxism by allegedly "socialist" countries; nationalism and racism, particularly antisemitism, science and scientism; science as a revolutionizing agent and the reverse—the Revolution as application of "scientifically" derived "ideals" as in the cases of Vietnam and the Gulag.

The breadth and complexity of all these topics might seem to compromise the credibility of the negative remarks introducing *Les Maîtres penseurs* a while back. What is missing from a book that is ostensibly burdened with no less than the re-reading of the last four hundred years of western history? The answer is, the "other" side of history; the history of the men whose praxis made humanity alongside inhumanity; a history not just of *ideas* linguistically disjointed from their concrete background to be read back into "history" in order to be found exactly equal to themselves through the myopic lenses of a-temporal, conceptual couples, such as logos and power or knowledge and domination.

Having sketched the major evils of this book in good conscience is to credit it with a lot more than it deserves on any count, since it might seem that the man does possess some philosophical point of view, some values or some vague conviction, however untenable. It isn't until about the middle of this piece that we come to the realization that, beyond sheer *reportage*, there is not one shred of inner concern or rationality guiding what reads like a collated series of tapes registered over late morning coffee. The ultimate treachery of this most insincere of writings is that, while denouncing the crimes that humanity has been perpetrating against itself, Glucksmann does not offer the slightest reason why things should be otherwise or why anybody, much less he, should care! In disdainful, nihilistic declarations, he butchers up history, bombarding it with victimized quotations by the very chicanery of words—the presumed target. For some examples of his inimitable and (hopefully) untranslatable style, witness: "The new State demands a new man. The one who promises us pedagogy in the 'broadest sense.' This vocabulary becomes that of great human flesh enterprises; it is a question of *producing* sentiments, of *constructing*—forming (*bilden*)—Stalin names them 'soul engineers;' he is dead, they are not" (pp. 172-3). Further on, having carefully selected *Mozart* as the archetype of a man who would suffer under Marx's vision of a future society freed from the division of labor, Glucksmann says: "If we must, let's make of Marx a philosopher of praxis, a dialectical materialist, a phenomenologist, a scientist—all right! But let us recognize that he thinks like all master thinkers in the space of the I-think-therefore-I-am, I make music therefore it does not escape me, I shall manifest the human totality of life, therefore nothing will escape me. . . . The division of labor is miserable because it divides the mastery of the I-think-therefore-I-am thus proving itself difficult, even impossible to master. This is what allows us to suspect why the anarchy of the capitalist market is condemned by all master thinkers, not because it is capitalist but because it is anarchy" (p. 203).

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Graciously parting with another piece of indisputable information, Glucksmann wonders: "Is it really *communism* that Marx opposes to the power of private property? Or is it just the *public* domain—nationalizations, State power? The chapter on the State, though originally projected is, as if by accident, missing from *Capital*" (p. 109). As J. Rancière points out, this is the utmost in Stalinist logic—the best proof that people are guilty is that there is no proof at all![1]

Thus, each time that Stalin or Hitler 'justifies' crime in the name of Reason, Progress, Man the need for Organization, Freedom, Democracy, etc., they are simply echoing and putting into appropriate practice the secret, genuine intentions and the monstrous schemes of world domination that all master thinkers have concealed underneath such empty words (136-60). All in all: "The master thinkers have systematized and rendered strategically manageable ideas and tactics largely diffused before their time by societies on the way to becoming rationally disciplinary. The heart of their doctrines (in the modern era, it is not a question of persuading but of dissuading) has been universally accepted. The great principle of their strategy—less to constrain than to terrorize—became that of every respectable general staff. Their grand design—the drilling and selection of the world's plebes—is generally present on the daily agenda" (291).

Large sections of this book are devoted to a reconsideration of the German idealist tradition and of Marx's thought in terms of their influence upon actual subsequent events. The discussion on Germany is premised on showing that the supposed existence of the two Germanies— a "bad" and a "good" one—and the sudden, inexplicable triumph of the evil streak in the German national character, eventually culminating in Nazism, is simply a myth (37ff, 45ff, 95ff). Reams of incredibly jumbled quotations later and without the slightest effort to penetrate into historical or social circumstances, Glucksmann is actually arguing for one evil, metaphysically constituted Germany whose unification and civil consciousness partakes of occult notions (e.g., Reason, Science, Knowledge)—chiefly a product of texts by masters like Fichte, Schiller, Goethe, Nietzsche and Marx. Anti-Semitism, for example, is treated tautologically as a function of burgeoning nationalism and of the need for statehood to which all of these dark minds contributed through their texts (100ff, 118ff). Thus, truisms, pseudoscientific insinuations about civic character, and plain aphorisms clinch all cases of racism as essentially matters of more or less pronounced will of wisemen to power and domination couched in the language of nationalism. Similarly, Stalin's case is, in the final analysis, a matter of texts used as swords with considerable help from the definite weakness of the Russian 'civic consciousness' (51ff, 71ff). And so, on and on: science and the French Revolution mesh into (what else?) the "science of revolution," which, though only a *text*, has somehow managed to move the world (why indeed?) for the last three centuries (125ff, 149ff).

One by one, all historical problems, ideas and stages are similarly galvanized into conceptual identity thanks to Glucksmann's aphoristic labeling. In rejecting Reason as an eternal category equivalent to domination from Plato to Mao, without ever bothering either to substantiate some internal connections or to define its particular manifestations, he falls unconsciously into the callous stance he purports to castigate. The critical and or negative use of reason never crosses his mind because Glucksmann has reduced the rational *telos* of humanity into the given, fetishized, means-oriented rationality which is specifically inherent to contemporary domination. The important

1. "Reply to Lévy," *Telos*, No. 33 (Fall 1977), p. 120.

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point here is not that, in his absolute arrogance, he is simply ignorant of the painstaking critiques of reason elaborated by Lukacs, the Frankfurt School or Marcuse—to name the obvious. In effect, Glucksmann is the *conscious* product of post-structuralist thought which, in its latest neo-positivist form, displays the clearest signs of utter conservationism. Antonio Banfi describes the logic of this process as a "negation of natural reality and of the function of scientific discovery which [as a result] becomes reduced to a system of logical or svntactical relations."[2] The crux of this attitude is a parallel constant refusal to deal with Man and his historically evolving reality in any concrete way. The image of humanity which is presumably fueling Glucksmann's tirades is nowhere to be found in this book beyond elusive insinuations (134); yet, they are quickly dispelled when all preoccupation with the I or the we of history and or with subjectivity in general are summarily dismissed as egocentric, preposterous ruminations of master thinkers like Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, Marx or Nietzsche whose project plays ironically right into Glucksmann's perfect sense of quotation: it is necessary, believes Nietzsche, "to *humanize* the world, so that we can feel in it more and more like masters" (199-201).

Who could possibly argue against this sleight of hand that relegates an essentialist image of man to the darkest recesses of a conspiratorial history of ideas? As Adorno demonstrates, this is the non-existent man of the "jargon of authenticity," an unhistorical, fixed essence replacing the lost image of God.[3] For, when the philosophical contemplation of man is artifically separated from the history of his struggle against the mystifications of nature and of a society conceived in equally metaphysical terms, all talk of humanity remains masked by the jargon of domination and of a reified conception of science. There is nothing more absurd than Glucksmann's abstract suggestion that, somehow, underneath his cyclical concept of history, there exists always a constant dimension of free humanity which has had nothing to do with, or has steered clear of, the historical process of domination. The uncritical (and particularly, the German) brand of existentialism alone has posited individual freedom in distinction from and, therefore, in abstraction from an unfree society. As A. Banfi defines it, the discourse used by this pseudo-humanist attitude is a dogmatic metaphysics which draws its mystifying power precisely from its reliance on the objectivism of common sense.[4] The thesis that empirical facts present us with an intrinsically untranscendable state of human affairs is actually the *journalist's* stock-in-trade; Lukacs provides us with a classic description: "The specialized 'virtuoso,' the vendor of his objectivied and reified faculties does not just become the [passive] observer of society; he also lapses into a contemplative attitude *vis-à-vis* the workings of his own objectified and reified faculties. . . . This phenomenon can be seen at its most grotesque in journalism. Here it is precisely subjectivity itself, knowledge, temperament and powers of expression that are reduced to an abstract mechanism functioning autonomously and divorced both from the personality of their 'owner' and from the material and concrete nature of the subject matter in hand. The journalist's 'lack of convictions,' the prostitution of his experiences and beliefs is comprehensible only as the apogee of capitalist reification.[5]

2. Antonio Banfi, "Humanisme et la culture contemporaine," *Comprendre*, No. 15, (1956), p. 21.

3. Adorno, T. *The Jargon of Authenticity* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1973), p. 62ff.

4. Antonio Banfi, "Osservazioni dell'uso critico della ragione," *La Crisi dell' uso critico della ragione* (Milano 1953), pp. 21-2.

5. G. Lukàcs, *History and Class Consciousness* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), p. 100.

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The question then is, insofar as this journalistic attitude has proven itself quite marketable, on what grounds can it lay claim even to the limited emancipatory function to which it aspires? In a recent inverview, with lexical agility typical of his style, Glucksmann defines his work not as a "new philosophy" but as "philosophy renewed."[6] It marks the emergence of a "more modest" type of intellectual who counters the stereotype of the outdated "magi intellectuals"—those who "bear general and final solutions for the people." Instead, these "renewed" philosophers "direct their activity toward precise problems; for example, they *attract attention* to colonial crimes, life in prisons, drugs, nuclear power and Larzac. This is no longer the era of great syntheses but of *detailed analyses*. If only the magi parties and imaginary programs would likewise disappear! Two centuries is long enough!" (95, my emphasis.) Leaving aside for a moment the pitiable identification of attention-getting projects with philosophy, we hit the core of this wearisome, blasé approach to a world silly enough to toil with imaginary programs, presumably in answer to imaginary problems. Indeed, *Les Maîtres penseurs*, allegedly about the mystical, unbreakable bond between knowledge and domination—a bond it never bothers to substantiate in its *truly* explosive dimensions—is in no way preoccupied with a serious discussion of, say, the State, human liberation, bureaucratic society, etc. By treating any one who condescends to deal with such problems like a charlatan and all those who listen like idiots, Glucksmann's anti-intellectualism results in sheer misanthropy masquerading as humanism in the garb of pragmatic 'common sense.' He assures us that it is useless to believe that, in their quest for power and domination through Reason and Knowledge, the masters have left something good in what they reject—Existence, Matter, Sentiment, Democracy—i.e., something that could still be salvaged by "leftist" thinkers today; for, "it is impossible to straighten out again what has been twisted into a theory that exists only to distort and tear out" (184).

Despite its attacks against 'reason' and 'science,' this latest brand of empiricism still feeds on the objectivistic concept of science that Husserl's *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* exposed as fraudulently 'disinterested' because hopelessly reified. In other words, when thought is separated from the thinking subject and the latter from the making of reality, science is robbed of its original human *telos* and, by extension, the notion of historicity loses its concrete grounding—man. The process of segmenting reality into areas of "precise problems" for "detailed analyses" draws its criteria for problem selection from the arsenal of linguistic analysis and breeds a social science whose central, uncritical concern is the burden of proving itself 'objectively scientific.' What structuralist as well as post-structuralist French thought have in common is the scientistic conviction that insofar as man is a relatively recent object of human knowledge,[7] he is just *another* scientific problem which is probably about to pass. Consequently, excessive preoccupation with a subjectively oriented history or with the intersubjective foundations of science constitutes anathema to scientific research worthy of that name. Foucault, who, together with Solzhenitsyn, emerges as the chief hero of *Les Maîtres penseurs,* has clearly enunciated his philosophical choices as early as 1966: "If there is one approach that I do reject... it is that (one might call it, broadly speaking the phenomenological approach) which gives absolute priority to the observing

6. "Interview with A. Glucksmann," *Telos* No. 33 (Fall 1977), p. 96.

7. Michel Foucault labels man a "recent invention" within "European culture." Cf. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* [*Les Mots et les choses*], (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), p. 386.

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subject, which attributes a constituent role to an act, which places its own point of view at the origin of all historicity—which, in short, leads to a transcendental consciousness. It seems to me that the historical analysis of scientific discourse should, in the last resort, be subjected, not to a theory of the knowing subject, but rather to a theory of discursive practice."[8]

A brief reconsideration of the philosophical stance implied by this statement will help us place Glucksmann's thought in a clearer perspective. Foucault touches here on the crucial difference between phenomenology—which employs an experience-oriented methodology in its philosophical search for the truth of human historicity—and positivist, naturalist or generally analytical movements which stress language over experience and derive their scope from language-oriented methods. Although ostensibly concerned with filling the gaps in Marx's theory of knowledge, both Althusserian structuralism and post-structuralist human science (like Foucault's) have failed to do so, precisely to the extent that they have hypostatized perceptual structures of frozen concepts by divorcing them from the living experience of the actively thinking subject. In contrast, when approached dialectically, i.e., as a moment of Marxism, phenomenological, experience-oriented methodology has a clear advantage in contesting and de-structuring the process of contemporary bureaucratic rationalization—as shown by the works of K. Kosik, H. Lefebvre, the Italian phenomenologists E. Paci, P. A. Rovatti and A. Vigorelli and, in particular, by Sartre.[9] By defining science in subjective, pre-categorial tems, phenomenological Marxism is capable of investigating the historical dimensions of rationalization by addressing itself to specific issues relating to *substantive rationality* (in Weberian terms); i.e., to the elaboration of theories of needs, values, interests and of qualitative historical change.[10]

Conversely, structuralist and post-structuralist thought is caught on principle in the webs of *formal rationality* insofar as it has adopted the socio-economic system's identical means-ends rationality for its own. Hence, the wealth of linguistic tools and knowledge about their usage—in contradistinction to their historical constitution—determines the scope of problems in exclusive relationship to words and logos. Sartre, among others, has stressed repeatedly that this procedure has arrested all possibility of

8. *Ibid.*, p. XIV.

9. Sartre, whose massive 1960 work *La Critique de la raison dialectique* is a brilliant example in this direction, has often said that he wrote it partly to enable himself to "deal" with Flaubert. cf. Contat, M. and M. Rybalka, *Les Ecrits de Sartre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), pp. 428-9. This illustrates the philosophical abyss separating him from Foucault as well as all "new philosophers:" Words, or a novel, are never commensurate to the praxis they mirror through their signs because they are a totalization, i.e., a temporal product of contradictions in the confrontation of speech and thought with material reality. Cf. J.-P. Sartre, "Les intellectuels," *Situations VIII*; and "L'Ecrivian et sa langue," *Situations IX*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1972). In specific reference to theories of needs and critiques of reason, the Italian school of Marxist phenomenology has recently contributed many articles and discussions through its collective journal, *Aut Aut*. Cf. No. 155-6 (set.-dic. 1976); No. 159-160 (mag.-ag. 1977), and No. 161 (sett.-ott. 1977) with special articles by Amedeo Vigorelli, R. Tomassini, Agnes Heller, Giac. Jervis, and others.

10. The present discussion focuses on phenomenological Marxism in specific reference to Foucault's position and his influence on men like Glucksmann. However, in the context of substantive issues suggested, the contributions of Lefort or Castoriadis remain invaluable, even though their actual affinity with Sartre's is often obscured by mutual polemics on tactics. It is sad to watch Castoriadis' petty bickering about whether or not Sartre anticipated May 1968...[*Telos*, No. 33, (Fall 1977), pp. 103-9.] Perhaps we should throw out Marx for not foreseeing...the French Commune! Among many of Sartre's analyses about 1968, cf. his *Situations VIII* and *IX*.

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thinking about history beyond the mere construction of conceptual structures whose diachronic existence and changes remain inexplicable.[11] This is due to the simple fact that structures "permit true scientific investigation" while "transitions" in history, that is, in "the domain of incertitude" do not.[12] Therefore, this type of positivist analytical thought has failed to supply Marxism with adequate underpinnings for a theory of transition, i.e., theories of knowledge and consciousness in reference to qualitatively revolutionary change.

From Althusser to Foucault and now to the "new philosophers," coming to terms with this failure *vis-à-vis* Marxist theory has translated into three different ways of confronting Marx. Thus, while Althusser works at readings of his 'scientifically' personalized dose of Marx, Foucault assumes a relativistic distance by declaring himself a Marxist to the extent that "all historians are"—though their work may not relate specifically to Marx.[13] Evidently, once the small problem of *one* history was nicely taken care of in this fashion, Foucault took to the practice of "regional, local, not totalizing" theories since they, alone, can "struggle" today "against authority."[14] At least one can be thankful that he has not blamed Marx's thought for its 'contribution' to today's irrationality—a lot more than Glucksmann's pragmatic concern with "precise problems" is willing to concede. As already suggested, in the context of contemporary bureaucratic society, if localized theory is to perform a liberating function and challenge the hegemony of the system's socio-economic rationality, it must constantly refer to the larger whole which it contradicts at the same time that it also represents it. Thus, in the specific example of a theory of needs, the relationship of present needs to those that society at once occludes and prefigures must rely for its adequacy on the tension between the particular and the universal.[15]

In contrast, Glucksmann's noisy denunciations of the supposedly outdated unified-theory approach prove hollow on two counts. Firstly, by reviving the old empirical technique of dealing with a reality parceled into particulars in total isolation from the universal, he hypostatizes the former to the utter obliteration of the latter. Accordingly, "reason" is never defined or historically differentiated as a *notion*, i.e., an idea that changes in time as it is also changed by human praxis. Instead—and this is also the case with "words"—reason is treated as a concept characterizing both reason *and* unreason and leaves no room for the different type of reason (irrational, negative) that an enlightened critique presupposes. Indeed, *Les Maîtres penseurs* does not entertain any point of reference from which its harangue could be launched in relation to reason-unreason categories. And, secondly, by transplanting his unoriginal (after all, Rousseau has already done it, so much better) knowledge-is-domination structure back into the last three centuries, not only does Glucksmann refuse to explain its relationship to history but also creates his own monstrously homogenized theory of history-as-the-word. His objectivism has eliminated the totalizing distance between

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11. Cf. Interview on "Replies to Structuralism," *Telos* No. 9 (Fall 1971), pp. 110-6.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
13. M. Foucault, "Les Jeux du Pouvoir," in D. Grisoni, ed., *Politiques de la Philosophie* (Paris: Grasset, 1976) pp. 172-3.
14. "The Intellectuals and Power: a discussion between M. Foucault and Gilles Deleuze," *Telos* No. 16 (Summer 1973), p. 104.
15. Adorno writes: "Knowledge can only widen horizons by abiding so insistently with the particular that its isolation is despelled. This admittedly presupposes a relation to the general, though not one of subsumption, but rather almost the reverse. Dialectical mediation is not a recourse to the more abstract, but a process of resolution of the concrete in itself." *Minima Moralia* (London: NLB, 1974), p. 74.

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praxis and facts, thought and language and has boiled history down to a concept which is subsequently stretched to cover reality as a whole. His unquestioning acceptance of orthodox usage of Marxian texts leads him to a pseudohistorical linear regression and enables him to repudiate the entire Marxian opus, thus disposing both of baby and bathwater.

As Negt notes, this new type of "non-sense" is bound to find an audience in western countries which still lag behind in developing a radically renovating Marxist theory to counter the "legitimation" fables peddled by orthodox Marxist practitioners of physical and theoretical elimination.[16] Glucksmann is quite right to point out France's on-going obsession with its Revolution and its monolithic effect upon the direction of French scholarship (289-91). Nonetheless, he does not miss the opportunity to compare this influence to the mystifying powers of Marxism (which?) and then, attribute to it the apparently late arrival of Marxism itself (still undefined) upon the French intellectual scene. He explains that "Marxism is not 'un-discoverable' [*introuvable*] in France—it was already found before Marx; already, since the Commune, the traditional 'history course' echoes the song of the master thinkers" (293-94). Revolution and Commune indeed!What of the seemingly small matter of the PCF's monopoly on Marxist theory and practice? Elsewhere, Glucksmann reports correctly on Sartre's assertion that, until the mid-1920s, Hegel's thought was hardly known in France (167); but, using his customary technique, he disregards the fact that Sartre's reference is to underscore the pervasive presence of a mechanistic Marxist brand *vs.* the total absence of Marx's living thought.[17]

Glucksmann's incapacity to differentiate between the *telos* of language particularizing thought (the universal) and its commodity marketing (according to the 'needs' of a socio-political order) stems from his own, personal relationship with the world-seen-through-the-word. When thought becomes what can only be sold, investigated and catalogued as language, when the 'scientific' stringing of word structures provides the only relevant "information" about reality, man is thought of *as spoken of*. "Empiricism," says Max Horkheimer, "always treats thought on the level it has reached at any one time. If it is reminded of the genesis of these abstractions, it refers the problem to psychology or sociology, or places it in the care of some other discipline....The special sciences are to deal with particulars and discretes. As distinct from them, philosophy is to deal exclusively with the nebulous sphere of the universal, with facts as such, with mere propositions, with language apart from content, with pure form."[18]

This description fits perfectly with Glucksmann's self-appraisal of a post-1968 "more modest" intellectual with "precise problems" to solve, except for the fact that he, like other "new philosophers" (Lévy, Landreau, Benoist, Jambet, *et al.*), is thereby laying a pernicious claim on the renewal of *philosophy*. Ritualistic invocations of May 1968 could never hope to turn into philosophy the best of "regional theories" about a history which, bereft of subjects and fleeing from 20th-century holocausts, takes refuge in the Rabelaisian 'humanity' of food, laughter and word games. As with all sensationalist writing, Glucksmann's anesthetizes us to a world that is constantly more of the same.

Eleni Mahaira-Odoni

16. Oskar Negt, "Vecchia ortodossia e 'nuovi bisogni' sulla cosidetta crisi del marxismo," *Aut Aut*, No. 162 (nov-dic. 1977), pp. 23-4.
17. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Search for a Method* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), pp. 17-23.
18. Max Horkheimer, "The Latest Attack on Metaphysics" in *Critical Theory* (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), pp. 154-6.

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Michel Foucault. *La Volonté de Savoir*. Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1976. Vol. I of *Histoire de la Sexualité*. 211 pages.

Nothing could be more private or more social than sex. It is this unique characteristic of human sexual patterns that has resulted in a long and harried controversy among critical social theorists, a controversy largely dominated by white males steeped in the Judaeo-Christian tradition and focused on the significance of sexuality to the revolutionary demand for social and political transformation. Voices from leftist circles have been scattered but loud, ranging from Lenin's straight-laced bunkum, which treated sexuality as an insignificant and at most secondary material need, to Reich's biologism, which pitted the revolutionary potential in the groins of communist youth. Now that the currently administered prescriptions equate the good life with good sex and good money, there is a new air of caution—if it feels good, don't do it, for fear of being exploited, exploitative, coopted, manipulated, alienated and the rest. Emancipatory sex, it seems, was hard to get. Not immune to the invasion of commodity fetishism and technological control, the status of biological needs in the on-going historical battle between transcendence and containment remains in question. Freudo-Marxists have begun to back away from their original enthusiasm for Freud's concept of sexual repression, but the debate has floundered on its own flaccid terminology. It is in light of this long-standing discussion that Michel Foucault's new book, *La volonté de savoir* (*The Will to Know*) provides at least a new attempt to spiff up the dialogue.

In his earlier works, Foucault has already exposed some of the darker corners of our intellectual history[1] and introduced a profoundly new method of inquiry and a baffling collage of new terminology.

La volonté de savoir is no exception. It is just as suggestive as Foucault's earlier works, if not even more provocative, disturbing and promising. *La volonté de savoir* initiates an ambitious project—a six-volume series that is to trace the history of sexuality from the birth of Christianity to the post-Freudian present. As the first and propadeutic volume in this series, *La volonté de savoir* delineates the theme and strategy of this massive undertaking. Similar to his other works, Foucault's focus is on the material conditions and social practices that lead to the emergence of a new set of "objects" and "personages," subject to institutional study and social control. The linking theme of all of Foucault's work is the dissemblance of power and domination, and in *La volonté de savoir* it is more specifically the relationship between power and sexuality that is analyzed. The deployment of sexual practice (the sex economy) within a rigid structure of domination is nothing new to a post-Freudian generation. What is new is Foucault's treatment of this phenomenon, his search for new models for deciphering this deployment, and his rejection of a rather naive model of sexual repression. As the title of the first volume suggests, behind the will to know the forbidden is a will to dominate and destroy the life-affirming instincts of the body.

The theory of sexual repression was first formalized in a quasi-scientific way by Freud in his early studies on hysteria. The repression of sexual instinct was seen as part of a normally functional personality, a necessary condition for culture, while hysteria was explained as the failure to repress intolerable wishes fully. In his 1915 paper,[2]

1. See D'Amico review in this issue.
2. S. Freud, "Repression," *Collected Papers* (New York, 1959), vol. 4, pp. 84-97.

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Freud defined "repression" as a mechanism of evasion in which a dangerous instinctual object-choice is repulsed or withheld from consciousness. It was a middle-phase between actual flight (running away from or removing the object) and cognitive rational condemnation. In the many uses of the term since Freud, they share in common the controls over the ideational and behavioral life of the individual. In these early works, the primary motive force behind sexual repression was the avoidance of unpleasure, the social implications of which Freud would begin to see in some of his later works.[3] Formulated in the early 20th century, Freud's theory of repression was able to bring together two seemingly disparate sides of the growing industrial society, the Judaeo-Christian tradition with its disdain for the body and the myth of the Fall, and the liberal tradition, with its social contract ideology and respect for possessive individualism. Under the guise of a scientific theory, Freud rewrote the drama of sin on the level of flesh vs. culture, using the concept of sexual repression to form the liaison and apology for the historically new form of unhappy consciousness.

The impact of Freud's analysis of the Western family and Marx's critique of political economy did not immediately jell into an easy marriage of Freudo-Marxism, since the body's existence in the private everyday life was for a long time considered secondary to the body's exigencies on the market. The devil wanted cash on the marketplace. Few saw him lurking around the bedroom or making soft deals with the denizens of private life. Wilhelm Reich was one of the first to see that the struggle against neurosis in Western society included the struggle against the material conditions and the repressive institutions that impose psychic and sexual misery on the private lives of the workers. His critique of the Western family, predicated on patriarchy and private property, bourgeois morality, and work ethic housed a new respect for the dangers of cultural hegemony. His emphasis on politicizing the questions of abortion, monogamy, birth control and anti-homosexual legislation led to a rather astounding mobilization of enthusiasm in the German Communist Party and the founding of the Sexpol movement at the Düsseldorf congress in 1931. However, the demise and dementing of Reich is a familiar story, a tragedy played out by the growing rigidity of the Communist Party and Reich's own dogmatic posture. The theory of sexual repression was denounced by the party as an attempt to replace the workers' struggle with a sexual politics in order to gain popularity with the communist youth. Reich's publication of the *Mass Psychology of Fascism,* which slanted ever more heavily toward a biologistic interpretation of repression, resolvable through the grace of orgasmic potency and adolescent rebellion, consummated that rupture.

Since Reich, Freudo-Marxists have tried to develop a less mechanical, more dialectical analysis of the relation between sexual repression and cultural sublimation. Adopting the various grids of cultural hegemony and one-dimensionality, Reich's piston-theory of repression has been refined and expanded to save the explanatory and emancipatory power of the repression hypothesis.[4] It is at this point that Foucault's contribution to the on-going discussion becomes important.

La volonté de savoir launches a fresh attack on the repression hypothesis. This original hypothesis, supported by a system of sexual misery, a system of taboos, injunctions of silence and negation, reveals, according to Foucault, only one side of our sexuality. It has become fashionable to dream of *a demain le bon sexe* (14) when the escape from sexual repression will at last become possible. Foucault, however,

3. In particular, *The Future of an Illusion* (1927) and *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930).
4. See Dahmer article in this issue.

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argues that this 19th-century model of sexual repression, tapered to meet the needs of the tedious, demanding and non-pleasurable work of a young industrial society, is no longer applicable to the sexuality of late capitalism (pp. 150-151). If we examine sexuality, its practice and discourse along the axis of authority-knowledge-sexual pleasure, we will discover the positive strategies of authority that have not only proliferated and stimulated the expression of sexual pleasure, but have also made it an object of epistemological interest, an object to be questioned by medicine, psychiatry, eugenics, psychology and other disciplines. Without denying the existence of sexual misery and repression (p. 27), Foucault brings to our attention a society that encourages to the nth degree the expression of sexuality, i.e., a society that incessantly chatters about sex.

In *La volonté de savoir*, Foucault offers four major arguments against the repression hypothesis: (1) it is based on an outmoded model of power; (2) it leads to a narrow construction of the family's function; (3) it is class specific and applies historically to bourgeois sexuality; and (4) it often results in a one-sided conception of how authority interacts with sexuality—a negative rather than a positive conception.

(1) The theory of sexual repression is based on what Foucault has labelled the *juridico-discursive* model (p. 109) or the legislative model of power. Power, schematized in this way, is productive only insofar as it can say *no*. Its effects are conceived as obedience, submission asnd deference (p. 112) and its primary function is to prohibit. Whatever disobeys is subject to condemnation or total negation. According to Foucault's interpretation, this explanatory model has a political parallel: the power of the sovereign and his right to legislate over the life and death of his subjects (p. 178). Just as the sovereign maintains the total power of negation over his subjects, so the repression model postulates a vetoing agency that suppresses the anti-social sexual drives of the individual.

This classical model of power is replaced by Foucault with a normative model, tailored to fit a new historical situation (p. 120). "Starting in the 18th century, the mechanisms of power. . . took charge of the life of human beings, human beings as living bodies. Even though it is true that juridical power, a power essentially centered on appropriation and death, served a representative function (non-exhaustive, without a doubt), it is absolutely different from the new procedures of power that function not as a right but as a technique, not as a law but as a norm, not as punishment but as control; a power that is exercised on the levels and forms projecting the state and its apparatus. Several centuries ago we entered a type of society where the law serves less and less as a code for authority or as a system of representation for that authority" (pp. 117-118). Corresponding to this normative model of power, there is a shift in ideological paradigms from the well-being of the sovereign to the well-being of all (180): the age of the utilitarian nation state. Under this new mechanism of power and its principle ("faire vivre ou rejeter dans la mort"—p. 181), power exercises itself in a positive way on life. It undertakes to care, cure, enhance, and multiply the body's well-being (p. 180). It is no wonder that eugenics, racism, and normative psychologies emerge as new discursive formations during this period. As opposed to the repressive hypothesis and its juridical model of power, Foucault proposes the adoption of this normative explanatory model, on grounds that it alone is receptive to the positive strategies of power that now interlace the relation between power and sex (p. 135).

(2) Foucault's second argument against the repression hypothesis is that it leads to a narrow view of the family's function that is based on the juridical model of power. The

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western family is seen as the locus of social acculturation (Freud) or ideological indoctrination (Reich), a process made possible through the interaction of an authoritarian patriarchal domination, the submission of women, and the incest taboo. Although Foucault does not want to dismiss this repressive function of the family, it must be enlarged to include the way in which sexuality has acquired its new positive expression: "The familial cell, which was validated during the 18th century, contained two main dimensions—the axis husband-wife and the axis parent-child—which allowed for the development of the main elements of the *dispositif de sexualité* (the feminine body, the precocious child, the regulation of birth and, to a lesser extent no doubt, the specification of perversion)" (pp. 142-143). All these new *personages* of sexual discourse are related to the family in one way or another: the neurotic woman, the frigid wife, the indifferent and masochistic mother, the impotent and sadistic husband, the hysterical little girl, the sexually precocious infant, and the homosexual (p. 118). In a sense, the family constitutes the stage upon which the new personages make their appearances.

(3) Foucault's third argument attacks the conventional wisdom of those Freudo-Marxists who conceptualize sexual repression as a tool of domination exercised by the rising bourgeoisie on the powerless working class. According to Foucault, the notion of sexual repression applied solely to the bourgeoisie. It was the bourgeois who discovered his sexual repression, just as it was the bourgeois who became fixated on the genitalia of his class. "The masturbating child, who has preoccupied the physicians and educators since the end of the 18th up to the end of the 19th century, was not the child of the people, the future worker for whom it was necessary to discipline the body; it was the high-school adolescent, the child surrounded by servants, tutors and governesses, who presented a hazard that might compromise, not so much the physical force, but the intellectual capacity, the moral obligation and the responsibility for conserving his family and the healthy lineage of his class" (p. 160). According to Foucault, if the bourgeoisie cared about the sex life of the proletariat, it was only insofar as it was interested in the reproduction of the work force. This changed somewhat during the late 19th century, when the sex life of the proletariat began to present some urban and economic problems (p. 167), but it would be a mistake to conceive of the working class as readily absorbent and open to the imposition of a bourgeois sex ideology. "It must be said that there is a bourgeois sexuality; that there are class sexualities" (p. 168).

(4) Finally, all of these arguments against the repression hypothesis lead to Foucault' major thesis that it is not the repression but the expression of sexuality that links power to sex. This can only be seen by adopting an entirely different model of power and discourse, one that functions by incorporating the multiple points of resistance and constraint of authority. These so-called positive strategies of power thus incorporate and pass beyond the simple negation of taboos and restrictions and have an expressive function—a positive affirmation of the body as an object whose desires, needs and functions are to be studied and nurtured by the various frameworks of science and technology (p. 11).

For Foucault, the newly systematized expression of sexuality was an indispensable moment in the further development of capitalism (p. 186), just as a system of repression and prohibition was necessary for its beginning stages (p. 150). The former, however, constituted the self-affirmation of the rising bourgeoisie, which established its identity through the new technologies of sex. "The blood of the bourgeoisie was its sex. This is not a play on words, but much more a theme belonging to the way in which

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the caste of nobility reappears in the bourgeoisie of the 19th century, under a species of concepts belonging to biology, medicine and eugenics. Genealogical concern was transferred into a preoccupation with heredity" (pp. 164-165).

Existing authority has nothing to fear from the release and expression of sexuality as long as it is controlled through these technologies of sex. The explosive model of sexual release, the *enfant terrible* of the 19th century, betrays an ideological lag. It is this that Foucault will present in his six-volume study on the history of sexuality, a study that will trace the rise of that austere *monarchie du sexe* (p. 211) behind the appearance of a rigidly repressive system. The question that Foucault poses is not whether we are sexually repressed, but why we insist so much on talking about this repression (p. 16), while assiduously cultivating a multitude ("une explosion") of discourses, disciplines, and strategies for talking about sex. We are, according to Foucault, a society preoccupied with sex (p. 68). We not only talk about sexuality but we address sexuality as if we really want to find out something, some secret truth, about ourselves. This collusion of sexuality and personal truth marks the peculiarity of an age tattooed by sexuality and its ironic belief that sexuality can liberate us (p. 211).

In an era resplendent with sex-linked liberation movement, the secret alliance between power and sexual practice comes as no surprise. Feminist movements in both America and Europe have attacked the imbalance of power and the perpetuation of violence against women under patriarchy. Battered wives and rape victims at one end of the spectrum and the meek housewife at the other constitute the new personages of feminist discourse, a discourse that seeks to articulate the male violence and female complicity contained under the patriarchal ideologies of monogamy, wifery, motherhood and heterosexuality. This growing awareness of the alliance between sex and violence has also led to a growing awareness of the more subtle forms of collusion. Recent critiques of the movement have rehabilitated all the old traps—cooptation, containment, and absorption. Feminist capitalism is still capitalism. New markets for exotic sexual experiences have been flushed into the media. Commodities have turned lavender on demand, clothes have gone uni-sex, sex manuals have liberated masturbation, and the suburbs have jammed the sex nexus. At the same time, late capitalism has fed itself on the decline of the nuclear family, the superficiality of sexual relations and the hot-paced insatiable hedonism of the sex set. While the Marxist analysis of the body and its violation focused on the public spheres, where the body was seen as the producer of surplus value, the feminist analysis has focused on the privatized body—the body that procreates, nurtures, produces use-value, services patriarchy, and dies quietly. The connection or identity of the two spheres has become an area of unquiet controversy. At the same time, the revolutionary demand to break the containment and restructure the possible has become obscured by the imperialism of the spectacle, the commodity fetish, the multiplication of discourse, and the confusion of freedom with ever greater fragmentation and atomization.

Often blinded by the actual physical violence of the rape paradigm, it has become evident that feminists need other models for grasping the holy alliance between the body and the will to power. In her critique of Western patriarchal religion, Mary Daly has called for a reappropriation of language and the creation of new semantic fields.[5] This was one of the first attempts to call attention to the violence involved in patriarchal language itself. It is at this point that Foucault's analysis of discourse as an act of violence imposed upon things becomes of interest. In a society where "truth" is

5. Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father* (Boston, 1973).

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potted in scientific discourse and protected by the institutions that produce it, Foucault's analysis of the persuasive coercion of these truths resensitizes us to the violence of language.

Foucault's method has been described by himself and others as an archaeology of knowledge. His interest has been directed toward various modes of historical discourse that have marked the birth of the so-called human sciences. His point of departure begins not with the phenomenon itself, since the object is already a product of symbolic mediation, but with the archives of collected statements stored away in libraries, records, files and diaries. The question that is brought to these things and to which they must conform (in the Kantian sense) is one of their very possibility: why were these things, these statements, these theories, these enunciations said, rather than others? The question addresses the empirical possibility and not the mere logical possibility of a given discourse. This leads Foucault away from the relativization of discourse and a playful reverie of possible logical worlds to the concrete, specific questions of why something was said and how such a discourse functions in the connection between social practice and the inert opacity of things.

What is to be valued in Foucault's analysis in his theory of the enunciation—the relation between symbol and symbolized is not only referential but productive. As D'Amico and others have pointed out, the symbolic realm is productive, "productive in that it materially forms needs and desires as much as the physiological substratum." Foucault's more penetrating insight suggests that the things referred to by the symbolic realm are produced when the need to talk about the world in a new way emerges. The enunciative act creates the possibility of its object and concept at the same time. Once embedded in the legitimacy of institutional armor, the enunciated objects are considered *real* and the enunciations *true*. If there is any threat of continuity in Foucault's conception of the history of discourse, it would be the ever-present and creative will-to-power, forever expanding and bursting forth—although episodically and variously—as the will to know. Except for this metaphysical monism, there is neither continuity, totality, genesis nor sweat on the back of history.

Just as Darwin's account of evolution replaced the older forms of teleological evolutionism, so Foucault's archaeology supplants an anthropological bias that has long haunted the work of historians and philosophers. History is no longer viewed through the metaphors of life, origin, return and intentional continuity. The transcendental narcissism of emancipatory theories and interpretations of history has been eliminated. We cannot see ourselves in history—we see nothing but the endless passage of discourse.

Beginning with the recorded, *le fait accompli*, the condensed dead weight of the past, the word as an object, Foucault's methodology snags on its very beginnings. Interested in discourse and the material conditions of its possibility, the very conditions that make such an archaeology of knowledge possible become the possibility of the world. Things are accorded the weight of creation, while the human subject becomes a mere appendage—the speaker, the knower, the listener, the transmitter—and above all the spectator of the passage of discourse. It is the methodology itself that results in Foucault's much discussed "death of the subject."[7]

There are, however, some strengths in Foucault's method.

In a related sense, Foucault's work falls in line with the much older tradition, that of

6. Robert D'Amico, "Desire and the Commodity Form," *Telos*, 35 (Spring 1978), p. 91.
7. M. Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York, 1970).

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Feuerbach and Marx and their struggle to eliminate an inflated philosophy of history or one infested with the anthropomorphic metaphors of subjective continuity. The task is to pass beyond the individual to the positive facts, to what exists, what is visible, verifiable, and non-subjective. Just as Marx preferred to talk of relations of production and means of production, which determine the mode of consciousness behind the back of the living, so Foucault's discourse on discourse turns on the revelation of thresholds, ruptures, transformations and production of discourse, defined by rules that transcend and indeed eliminate the subject.

Unlike Marx, however, Foucault's archaeological method is not designed to establish identity and similarity, but difference and rupture: to establish the difference between the present and the many pasts. For Marx, the present was also different from the past, but only insofar as it spelled the end of a long process at work in history. For Foucault, the radical rupture that sets us apart from the past does not mean we have reached a point of closure; rather, it bears witness to a pointillism of finitude, chance, discontinuity and death.

Language itself carries no promise of immortality. "In my speaking, I am not banishing my death, but actually establishing it; or rather, I am abolishing all interiority in that exterior that is so indifferent to my life and so *neutral*."[8] A name is but a word and part of a discursive proliferation governed by rules that are not all given to our consciousness. Even "Foucault" becomes a fictional entity!

Seeing the use of discourse as an assult on the body forces Foucault to reflect this violence in his own meta-level description of discourse. It is not surprising to find a militaristic tone in Foucault's self-invented discourse, a vocabulary replete with instrumentalities and strategies for war. But the war remains purely academic. Foucault's failure to speak to our emancipatory needs lies not so much in his failure to reach the radical limits of nominalism, but in just that. If the conditions of discourse are meant to structure the possible, we find in Foucault's own discourse the impossibility of emancipation.

Returning now to *La Volonté de savoir*, I would like to show briefly how Foucault applies his general methodological assumptions to the area of sexuality. This is exemplified on three different levels: (1) the possibility of an archaeology of sexuality; (2) "sexuality" as a product of a discursive formation rather than a "thing in itself"; and (3) the history of sexuality as one of discontinuity and rupture—a product of the disruptive and prodigal will to power.

(1) It is the task of an archaeology of knowledge to analyze this discursive fact, *la mise en discours du sexe*, to reveal the polymorphic techniques of power and to disengage the will-to-truth within the regime of power, knowledge and pleasure. "I would like to. . . research the instances of discursive *production* (which most certainly at times procure silences also), the *production* of power (which sometimes employs prohibitions) and the *production* of knowledge (which often circulates errors and systematic misunderstandings); what I hope to achieve is a history of these instances and their transformations" (p. 21—emphasis added). In this way, the history of sexuality becomes a history of our discourse about sexuality.

According to Foucault, there are two ways in which power, truth and sexual pleasure can interact: *ars erotica* and *scientia sexualis*m, the latter being the mode most prevalent in the Western world. Erotic art as a practice extracts the truth of sexual pleasure from experience itself—a truth shrouded by a process of initiation and

8. M. Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York, 1965), p. 210.

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available only to those belonging to a special apprenticeship. As an art rather than a science, its appropriation requires a secret mode of transmission and a master-pupil hierarchy, in which the initiate learns how to aggrandize, sophisticate, intensify and perfect the experienced pleasures of body. In contrast, *sciencia sexualis* or the science of sex treats the body as an object to be studied, interrogated and deciphered. Mimesis is replaced by a technology of sex. The master is replaced by the therapist, the counselor, the sexologist, who do not *show* but listen, analyze and decode. The voice that speaks and reveals comes not from above but from below. It is the voice of the patient, the neurotic, the pervert, the hysteric, the deviant or the delinquent child—the many new *personages* pacified on the technocratic couch of analysis. Of course, such a relationship is not devoid of pleasure, but unlike the pleasure elicited in *ars erotica*, it is the pleasure of analysis, the pleasure of exposing and talking about sex within the privacy of a professional space (p. 95). The result: a large Western archive on sexual pleasure (p. 85), the multiplication of discourses about sex, and a correlative intensification of power or authority (p. 45).

According to Foucault, Christian societies have always talked about sex. The confession, a ritualized form of discourse, has always served as a way of talking about sex, as if such talk revealed a secret truth, if not *the truth* about the individual. "The confession of the truth is inscribed in the very heart of those procedures through which authority individuates itself" (p. 79). The displacement of the confession from its religious function to the therapist's couch was an important step in developing a science of sex or a science of confession.

(2) The multiplication of discourse on sexuality was not so much a process of discovering the truth about sexuality, as if sexuality, a thing-in-itself, existed outside of discourse, as much as it was the production of the object itself, the historical emergence of "sexuality" as a relatively autonomous empirical dimension to be studied. In a sense, "sexuality" emerged as a theoretical term, within *le dispositif de sexualité*, which referred globally to a multitude of phenomena related to the body, as something produced and consumed. With the birth of *scientia sexualis,* there emerged a number of new empirical *personages* whose existence justified the existence of the new discursive and technological strategies. "In the preoccupations with sex, which emerged all during the 19th century, four figures designed themselves, as privileged objects of knowledge, as targets and anchorage points for the enterprise of knowledge: the hysterical female, the masturbating child, the Malthusian couple, and the perverted adult. Each of these corresponded to different strategies, which in its own way, traversed and exploited the sex of children, women and men" (p. 139).

Foucault's reconstruction of the genealogy of sex does not result in a smooth and continuous development, but a history marked by two distinct points of rupture. The first rupture occurred during the 17th century, which ushered in an age of sexual repression; sex was confined to the matrimonial bedroom, the body inscribed by new imperatives of decency, and the language decorated with new rules of silence and prudery (p. 152). However, during this same period and up until the present century, new mechanisms of authority, the positive strategies of *bio-pouvoir*, were evolving. This process did not significantly break into the open until the second great rupture in the history of sexuality occurred in the 20th century, an age resplendent with a multiplication of disciplines, problems, *personages* and technologies for taking care of the body and its expression. This period Foucault refers to as an inflection rather than a rupture on the curve of repression. The 20th century marks a more relaxed mentality in which the perversions and indecencies of earlier centuries were moderately

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tolerated: sex was liberated from the conjugal bedroom, taboos lifted from children, perversity less condemned, women less stereotyped, and lifestyles of various kinds accepted (p. 152). Far from being an age of prolific perversion, the 20th century, when compared to the last three centuries, represents an age of *carte blanche* exhibitions and voyeurism. Foucault's interpretation of this tainted history focuses on two strategic levels, one in which sex, as a point of juncture between the body and population, becomes an object of epistemological interest, and the other in which it becomes an object to be regulated by a system of power, organized around the expression and production of sexuality. It is this interaction among knowledge, power and sexual pleasure that accounts for the two great ruptures in the genealogy of sex.

Insightful though it may be, there is a vacuity that haunts much of the clean elegance of Foucault's work—a vacuity attributable to the very limits of radical nominalism and resulting in the lack of critical discourse. If it is true that the rise of the bourgeoisie depended on the multiplication of sex technologies and power strategies, there is room for a critique (a critique of technologized sexuality). If it is true that psychoanalysis as a "science" of the subject was transposed into a science of sex, which placed causality in the subject, the truth of the subject in *l'autre qui sait*, and the self-knowledge of the subject in what the subject does not know (p. 94), there is room for a critique (a critique of a "science" of the subject, whose very possibility rests on the exclusion of the subject). But Foucault's discourse is incapable of such critique. A positivistic archivist-archaeology, which has cut itself off from any form of subjectivity, lacks the very element that made Marx's discourse a critical one. We can only question from the outside the will-to-power implicit in Foucault's discourse.

It seems as though a meta-discourse that treats its object (other discourse) as an ensemble of events may be just as "productive" as any other relatively autonomous discourse that "produces" its object of inquiry. Behind Foucault's preoccupation with the will-to-power one might suspect a man making an institution of himself, through the invention of a new meta-discourse and its objects of inquiry.

Foucault's distinction between positive and negative strategies of power—one similar to the traditional notion of internalized and external coercion[9]—enables us to think and perceive the regime of power in a different way. As in any system of hegemony, there is a nexus of complicity between the oppressors and the oppressed. Power is not only imposed from the top down, but it is granted from below. What Foucault's analysis has shown is that the form of complicity found in corporate capitalist society involves the multiplication, colonialization, and isolation of symbolic interaction. With the birth of the many disciplines and specialized languages related to sexuality, we have the construction of an artificial "bad infinity," which forever breeds its objects and epistemes while losing self-reflective control over its own parochial activity and its relation to the totality.

Above all, Foucault's analysis of sexuality retains a sterile and genderless quality—a drama of the state vs. genitalia. The relationships among sex, power and knowledge have been plugged into an epistemological framework, obfuscating the polarity and power struggle that exists between the two genders. In the *Archaeology of Knowledge,* Foucault describes his own method: "the positivities that I have tried to establish must not be understood as a set of determinations *imposed from the outside* on the thought of individuals, or inhabiting it from the inside, in advance as it were; they constitute rather the set of conditions in accordance with which a practice is exercised, in

9. See Dahmer, *op.cit.*

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accordance with which that practice gives rise to partially or totally new statements, and accordance with which it can be modified.... It is an attempt to reveal discursive practices in their complexity and density; to show that *to speak is to do something*...."[10]

With regard to power itself, Foucault describes the relations of power as at once intentional and non-subjective: they are traversed by a calculation of goals and objectives, but are not the result of one individual's decision.

Both of these claims suggest that sexuality as a system of discourse imbedded in power relations is administered from the outside—absolving the empowered male side of the sexual dyad from any responsibility or control. However, the individual does not masturbate in front of the state.

It would be interesting to analyze these "conditions of discourse" as a gender prerogative—the male speaker and the female admirer (both as listener and male-impersonator). It comes as a surprise to me that Foucault has failed to recognize the more specific male will-to-power inherent in a patriarchal discourse, while easily revealing the will-to-power as part of an epistemological containment of objects. Women have always been the sex object *par excellence*, to be analyzed, interrogated, questioned, doubted, observed, displayed, owned, stolen or borrowed. To analyze this would require a much larger strategy of conquest and one that would go beyond and incorporate the epistemological project described by Foucault.

In summary, then, Foucault's method, albeit brilliant in its execution, suffers from at least two levels of false abstraction: (1) his obfuscation of the politics of sexuality into the general term "sexuality" and his treatment of that as a purely epistemological problem; and (2) his circular methodology that collapses the subject-object dialectic into the conditions of his own methodology—the relation between discourse and its material conditions. The result is to eclipse and frustrate the very possibility of an emancipatory subject, leaving us high on riderless words.

There is, however, some value to be found in Foucault's approach. His radical nominalism enables us to break through much of the ideological blindness that has hampered the Left's analysis of social practice and ideology. He has unravelled the highly sophisticated mechanism at work in social practice—an intricate interaction between institutions, discourse, technology, economics, law, authority and the body. However, we seem to find ourselves trapped in the mania of a bibliophilic mind. We are stuck in the middle of another elaborate discourse that now writes us out of existence, while the weapons pile-up reminds us ever more that we are indeed the mere phantom of things. The hoped-for emancipation becomes a mere show of words which try to point beyond themselves without success. It is a consequence of Foucault's own method that we are able to reach *the place of the individual* within a highly complex network of power and social practice, only to find it vacant—a *personage* devoid of subjectivity and *Innerlichkeit*.

In a recent interview, Foucault defines his own task as an intellectual. "The essential political problem for the intellectual is not that of criticizing the ideological content to which science is linked or to bring it about that his scientific practice should be accomplished by a correct ideology. But of knowing that it is possible to constitute a new politics of truth.... It is not a question of emancipating truth from every system

10. *Archaeology of Knowledge, op.cit.*, p. 4. Emphasis added.

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of power—which would be a chimera because truth is already itself power—but of detaching truth from the forms of hegemony...."[11]

Foucault, however, stands convicted of his own folly. While calling for the emancipation and extrication of discourse from the stays of hegemony, his own meta-discourse becomes part of the same construction. It is not at all clear how we can reappropriate language and act collectively to break the containment of the positive power strategies. Foucault's reduction of the subject-object dialectic to the level of word and object forecloses the very possibility of emancipation and transcendence. His cry for action is hypocritical. As a critic of specialized and institutionalized discourse, Foucault has made an institution of his own name. His complicity is an intellectual trap—a false fragmenting of the totality—which leads to the ever increasing gap between the impotent expertise of the knowers and the romantic anarchism of the doers.

Jacqueline Zinner

11. M. Foucault, "The Political Functions of the Intellectual," *Politique Hebdo*, Nov. 29, 1976, reprinted and translated by Colin Gorden in *Radical Philosophy*, 17 (Summer 1977), pp. 12-14.

Simone Pétrement. *Simone Weil: A Life*. New York: Pantheon, 1976. 577 plus x pages.

The burden on intellectuals to define and account for their social role as well as their philosophical and historical position has never been so painfully borne as in the modern age. From the First World War to the advent of the Second, Europe saw its writers, artists and academics struggle to integrate their work, specifically the critique of a capitalist social order and its positivist ideology, and their own personal involvement in that society. The inter-war decades were ones of experimentation and disappointment, the result of a quest for many gods, all inevitably destined to fail. In discussing one intellectual's journey to God, a search which pervaded every aspect of Simone Weil's work and life, we gain insight into the intellectual trap of absolutism to which this generation was particularly prone. It was a trap to be sprung only in the aftermath of war with the ensuing philosophical reconciliation of Marxism and existentialism.

Simone Pétrement, biographer and friend of Simone Weil, points to the significance of Weil's last request to her spiritual advisor, Father Perrin, to remember her ideas more than her life: "If no one consents to take any notice of the thoughts that, though I cannot explain why they have settled in so inadequate a being as myself, they will be buried within me.... I should like you to transfer the charity you have so generously bestowed from me to that which I bear within me, and which I like to think is of far more value than I am myself."[1] This is a peculiar plea for Simone Weil to make. For it implies a separation of subject and object, of person from thought. Weil had based her own philosophy on the phenomenology of her teacher Alain, for whom subjectivity is truth; that is, one cannot judge a doctrine independently of man, of the being who maintained

1. Simone Weil, *Waiting for God* (New York, 1951), p. 100.

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it.[2] Weil would rather have agreed with the statement by Merleau-Ponty that "my body is caught in the fabric of the world but the world is made of the stuff of my body;" however, she would be forced to qualify this by including the hand of God.

Nothing could be more foreign to Weil than the notion that an act or thought could be detached from The Thinker. Gustave Thibon comments that "the perfect bareness of her style which reflects her inner strippings is evidence of the close relationship between words and her life."[3] In living, Weil was never willing to formulate the Weberian separation of "politics" and "science." Perhaps, her request was in response to her fear that Father Perrin's assessment that "her soul was incomparably superior to her genius" would be taken seriously by more than just him.[4] Weil knew that her soul and her genius were inextricably linked. She asks the reader instead not to be seduced by saintliness and appearance but to hold her words in account with her life. It is our misfortune that many are content simply to mystify Simone Weil, extracting her from her historical context and laying her scholarly work aside. The end result is the reduction of her life to the object of cultism and worship by those more in need of heroes than understanding. In fairness to Weil, we must dismiss categories of saintliness and concentrate on this extraordinary woman's quest for authenticity.

Kosik suggests that reality is formed through a dialectical relationship between the everyday and history. In the everyday, the individual develops his own relation on the basis of his own experience, his own possibilities and activities. Everyday life consists of instinctive, subconscious, unreflected mechanisms of acting and living.[5] Beyond the limits of this world is another, the very opposite of the everyday: history. In the collision of these two, the truth of each is revealed. The everyday of Weil was one acutely aware and invaded by history, and in this collision she had a vision of truth. Yet unlike a Camus, who in seeing truth revealed, rejected totalizing ideology, Simone Weil clung to the idea of absolute truth rather than accept its transitory nature.

Weil's life was rooted in the elite intellectual circles of the twenties and thirties without her ever severing ties with the ordinary and those living in the underbelly of society. She was the daughter of a French, Jewish professional. Her brother André was to become a famous mathematician. She studied with Alain and graduated from the *Ecole Normale* in 1931, having earned the nickname of the "red virgin." She was a high school teacher and a militant in the labor movement. In 1934, she began a year of factory work. She participated in the Spanish Civil War on the Republican side, though "without hope and without enthusiasm for the way it was being conducted, but simply not to be spared its dangers."[6] In the early 1940s, she was an agricultural worker in Marseilles. In 1942, having joined the Free French Forces, she left for America but, en route, she died of malnutrition in London in 1943.

Pétrement characterizes Weil as a mind capable of seeing an epoch. And while capable of intellectual detachment, she never withdrew from the everyday of political movements. She was critical of both the political left and the right; yet at the same time, she was "more a lover of order and hierarchy than most of those who would call themselves conservative, and more truly a lover of the people than most of those who call

2. Simone Pétrement, "The Anti-Politics of Simone Weil," *Politics* (Winter, 1949), p. 16. Cf. Pétrement, *Simone Weil* (New York, 1976), pp. 25-42.
3. Gustav Thibon, *Simone Weil: As We Knew Her* (London, 1953), p. 135.
4. T. S. Eliot, Preface, Simone Weil, *The Need for Roots* (New York, 1952), p. viii.
5. Karel Kosik, *Dialectics of the Concrete* (Boston, 1976), p. 43.
6. Pétrement, "Anti-Politics," p. 14.

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themselves Socialist."[7] Weil, in fact, escapes political classification. Instead, she is, in Conor Cruise O'Brien's term, anti-political, stemming from a deep-rooted aversion to associations of people, the obvious pre-requisite for political activity. In her essay on the "Needs of the Soul," she states that the "we" is an illegitimate middle term between the soul and God.[8] In a letter to Bernanos, she also wrote about her disillusionment with the trade union movement and political activity in general: "From my childhood onward I sympathized with those organizations which spring from the lowest and least regarded social strata, until I realized such organizations are of a kind to discourage all sympathy."[9] In this distrust of the political we, one can see the influence of Alain's thought on Weil.

As mentioned, Alain was essentially a phenomenologist who asserted that subjectivity was truth: that the doctrine and the man who maintains it cannot be judged separately. He also asserted the supremacy of the ego: "the 'I' is good."[10] Yet while Alain believed that it was the will that allowed for truth, Simone Weil saw the effacement of the self and the limitation of the will as the basis of real intelligence. This difference led Weil from the moralism of Alain to her own mysticism.

H. Stuart Hughes includes Alain under the general category of neo-Machiavellian, i.e., he viewed power from an elitist perspective. Yet, if he understood life from the position of the rulers, he, as Hughes notes, took his stand with the ruled.[11] The same holds true for Simone Weil and accounts for her love of order and hierarchy on one hand and immense compassion and seeking out of the miserable on the other. For both, the ideal political system would be a utopian state governed by a spiritual and moral elite: a rule of saints.

Both Alain and Weil were strongly anti-militaristic and anti-nationalistic, yet both actively participated in the wars of their decades. Like Alain in 1914, Simone Weil believed that when one could no longer prevent war, one must take one's share of the misfortune along with the group to which one belonged; one must take one's stand with the ruled. In 1938, Simone Weil wrote to Bernanos with regard to her role in the Spanish Civil War: "In July, 1936, I was in Paris. I don't love war; but what always seemed to me most horrible in war is the position of those in the rear. When I realized that, try as I would, I could not prevent myself from participating morally in the war, I decided that, for me, Paris was the rear."[12] Pétrement also makes note of Weil's stance in the second war: "From the beginning of the war she led an ascetic life, sleeping on the ground, eating very little, for she gave half her allotments to the political prisoners in a nearby camp. . . Not only were the needs of others greater then, but the war itself elicited such conduct from the noble soul of one who wanted to share to the utmost a frightful misfortune."[13] While the fact that Weil cast her lot with the victims is not in doubt, Pétrement's vision is obscured by her view of "Saint Simone." Her concern for the poor did not emerge out of obligation to the "we," the community of humans, but rather from a total committment by Weil to her self. For this reason, Conor Cruise O'Brien correctly views Weil as anti-human.

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7. Eliot, Preface, p. viii.
8. Conor Cruise O'Brien, "The Anti-Politics of Simone Weil," *The New York Review of Books*, May 12, 1977, p. 23.
9. Pétrement, *Simone Weil*, p. 333.
10. Pétrement, "Anti-Politics," p. 17.
11. H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society* (New York, 1977), pp. 276-77.
12. Pétrement, *Simone Weil*, p. 268.
13. Pétrement, "Anti-Politics," p. 14.

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A political portrait of Weil shows her life as resting on certain philosophical beliefs from which she would not sway. She judged ideas by the actions of their adherents. Consequently, it is no surprise that she was critical of all secular ideologies and hence would never commit herself to a purely political stance. Still, this did not remove her from society but drove her into its heart in order to test herself according to the measure of life against doctrine, a test which she pursued single-mindedly, trying to escape this inconsistency of the human condition. Because of this, while she led her life 'with' the people, she could never be 'of' them. Her rejection of the communal foundation forced her to a position of radical individualism and a belief in the establishment of a moral order in which the "I" could attain spiritual freedom, hence the quest for God. The paradox of this being that while she was repelled by the historical movement toward totalitarianism and nationalization of the masses, she came dangerously close to accepting a spiritual and moral totaliarianism, based on committment to the absolute.

Simone Weil sought absolute truth, a goal which stood opposed to all the concrete realities of the times. Each war, every attempt at revolution, the numerous failings of Europe's demogogues, and the general onslaught of capitalist relations into human lives convinced Weil that everything on earth is subject to conditions and limitations. Yet like so many of her contemporaries, she could not accept this relativity as being truth. Thus she fell prey to the temptation to look beyond earth for redemption. In this respect, she could not emancipate herself from her own religious and historical background. There existed in her thought a bourgeois acceptance of the idea of law. This implied also an acceptance of the transhistoricity of law, that its meaning can be found outside the immediate historical context. To be rooted in this conviction necessitates the existence of an absolute. To reject it means to accept all law, and all forms of imposed order and structure, as ideological. Driven as she was by a utopian vison, she could not accept the conditionality of truth, although she was entirely in agreement with the conditional nature of human life itself.

Simone Weil's flirtation with Marxism as well as her later committment to Catholicism was based in her perception of it as an absolute doctrine. In *Gravity and Grace,* Weil wrote the following with regard to communists: "To see a good condemned by the next turn of events is intolerable. . . The strength of soul shown by the communists is to be explained by the fact that they are directed not only towards what they believe good, but also towards what they believe must ineluctably and soon come to pass. Thus, without being saints they are able to bear sufferings which only a saint could endure for the sake of justice alone."[14] She radically rejected all limited associations and saw strength only in those with claims to universality. Thus Judaism repelled her because of the concept of the "chosen people," and Catholicism attracted her because of its proclaimed universal message. Fortunately for her beliefs, Catholicism justified itself in other-worldliness while Marxism, seeking reality only on earth, could not live up to the rigor of her standards.

Simone Weil's desertion of the left and gradual approach to the Catholic Church was in part crystalized by her experiences in the Spanish Civil War. In her response to Bernanos' work *Les Grands Cimitieres Sous La Lune,* Weil writes in a letter: "What do I care that you are a royalist, a disciple of Drumont? You are incomparably nearer to me than my comrades of the Aragon militias, and yet I loved them."[15] The atrocities of the civil war convinced Simone that truth can never be contained or found in political

14. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
15. Pétrement, *Simone Weil,* p. 333.

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categories. The intoxication with death during the Spanish Civil War was not limited to either side. Hence while she could sympathize with the republicans, their vision of truth was no clearer than that of the royalists. She again writes to Bernanos: "My own feeling was that when a certain class of people has been placed outside the temporal and spiritual authorities outside the ranks of those whose life has value, then nothing comes more naturally to men than to kill. . . The very purpose of the whole struggle is soon lost in an atmosphere of this sort. For the purpose can only be defined in terms of the public good. . . and men have become valueless."[16] The civil war provided the background for Weil's approach to the revulsion from politics leading her to the conclusion that the only good is that which is not subject to chance and consequently outside this world. This realization however did not decrease the dilemma Weil had created for herself.

Weil saw liberty as the ability of men to make choices. Yet she also acknowledged that when the possibilities for choice are so wide as to injure the common good, men cease to enjoy liberty.[17] Thus while revolted by politics, Weil saw the need for a moral, authoritarian structure to limit the possibilities of man in order for man to liberate himself.

Revealing in Weil's comments is an essentially anti-humanistic position albeit her great compassion for the suffering. Underlying this feeling was a contempt for human life perhaps most manifest in her treatment of herself and in her pursuit of self-annihilation. Her neighbor was someone preferable to her self as opposed to her possessing a sense of a person as someone else. The irony in her humility and self-abnegation is that it is the position of the egoist: a life inspired by negative preoccupation with self. As Nietzsche stated: "The religious man thinks only of himself." Her concern for sharing the misery of the poor pertained more to her own need than theirs. In this respect, Weil explains her obligation as an intellectual to participate in the life of the common man: "I think that intellectual culture, far from giving a right to privilege, constitutes in itself a privilege which is almost frightening and which involves terrible responsibilities per contra. . . I want to prove to myself that I think this way by shouldering, for a time at any rate, a burden such as those who have no share in this privilege bear all their lives."[18] Thinking was seen then by Weil as a privilege, and the price to be paid for it was direct involvement with the people. The differentiating factor between the people and the intellectual was self-consciousness.

At the core of Weil's intellectual perspective was the principle of all or nothing. Thibon characterizes her doctrine as "vertigo of the absolute." Vertigo is caused by attraction to an abyss, in this case God. The first effect of vertigo however is loss of balance. Thus Simone Weil found herself dazed by the vision of the absolute and consequently had difficulty finding her way in the relative.[19]

The historical period itself contributed to this vertigo. On the level of appearances, choices seemed concrete. Ideological right and wrong presented themselves in tangible extremes. The absolute of capitalism was embodied in the United States and England and that of communism in the Soviet Union, each offering its own promise of utopia. Simultaneously, fascism was reaching its maximum appeal offering to the masses the nation as god. And yet in the relative, in the everyday, the bindings were falling apart and the actors of all sides too clearly resembled one another in their implementation of doctrine. The gap between the creator and the creature seemed increasingly

16. *Ibid.*, p. 332-33.
17. O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
18. Thibon, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 142.

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unbridgeable. Still, the problem was conceptualized by Weil, and many other intellectuals at this time, as resting with the creature rather than the god.

Simone Weil finds herself in basically the same predicament that Sartre expressed in his character of Heinrich in "Le Diable Et Le Bon Dieu." One is tempted to conclude that there is always choice, but this is illusion. Heinrich wanted to choose but he could not choose the Church because it had abandoned the poor nor could he choose the poor who had abandoned the Church.[20] One is thus forced into a living contradiction, unable to absolutely choose. Similarly, Weil states with regard to the Church and baptism, "I have sometimes told myself that if only there were a notice on the church doors forbidding entry to anyone with an income above a certain figure, and that a low one, I would be converted at once."[21] But this is not the case and the conditional nature of life is such that total committment is always impossible. One yearns for the absolute, but it does not reveal itself, hence the appropriateness of the title of her collection of religious essays: *Waiting for God.* It would take another war for intellectuals to reformulate the problem in terms of "Waiting for Godot."

Simone Weil's search for the absolute places her within a hall of mirrors in which appearance and reality become totally confused and from which there emerges no sure path. If good is possible only outside this world, then everything earthly is reduced to appearance and man to nothingness. And yet if one insists on a good outside the world, God, then there simultaneously exists the possibility of lifting man to the status of divinity. Yet if man busies himself with everything possible between heaven and earth, he neglects himself, man. And without man, reality is not authentic.[22]

The role of the intellectual in society was one that concerned Weil, though her moralism alienated her from fellow intellectuals struggling with the same questions. Simone de Beauvoir gives an interesting and revealing account of Simone Weil in her memoirs: "A great famine had broken out in China, and I was told that when she heard the news she (Weil) had wept: those tears compelled my respect much more than her gifts as a philosopher. I envied her for having a heart that could beat across the world. . . I don't know how the conversation got started; she declared in no uncertain tones that only one thing mattered in the world today, the Revolution that would feed all the starving people on the earth. I retorted no less peremptorily, that the problem was not to make men happy, but to find the reason for their existence. She looked me up and down: 'It's easy to see that you've never gone hungry'. . . . Our relationship did not go any further. I realized that she had classified me as 'a high-minded little bourgeoise'. . . ."[23]

This interchange reveals two points in need of elaboration. The first pertains to Weil's inability to formulate the terms of her own entrapment in bourgeois society and class position. Though this was an accusation she easily flung at her contemporaries and with which she dismissed De Beauvoir and Sartre during their years at the Sorbonne, it is an odd accusation for her to make. For while Simone Weil never surrounded herself with bourgeois settings and always attempted to live simply, her commitment to poverty had an escape value: namely her parents. Poor in Roanne and Le Puy, Simone Weil was always able to fall back upon her parent's resources in time of need. Wounded in Spain, her parents again appeared to rescue her. The burden of hiding Trotsky and other

20. Jean Paul Sartre, "Itinerary of a Thought," in *Between Marxism and Existentialism* (New York, 1974), p. 34.
21. Pétrement, *Simone Weil,* p. 333.
22. Kosik, *op. cit.*, p. 148.
23. Pétrement, *Simone Weil,* p. 51.

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political refugees fell not on Simone but on her bourgeois parents, granted at her request. In every critical life situation, Simone Weil was able to retreat to her parents' care except at her death in London. One can only speculate on her survival if in fact her parents had been granted entrance visas to England. In this respect, Weil never was entirely an adult, that is, she never had to assume the complete responsibility for her life and yet had deceived herself into believing that she had liberated herself from her class position. That she did so is only human. What is to be criticized is her lack of acknowledgement.

More importantly, however, was the central question posed by the exchange between Weil and de Beauvoir: is the issue to make people happy or to find the reason for their existence. While agreeing with Weil that people's subsistence needs are a primary human concern, the central philosophical question has to be that of existence itself. Weil's reflections on her year of factory work reveal her own emphasis on the secondary issue of 'happiness' as opposed to the fundamental one of meaning.

Trotsky once retorted to Weil that "individuals never fully defend their individuality (it is impossible), but combat only that which troubles their individuality."[24] Weil's focus on factory life pertained to what troubled her individuality, and as a consequence, she never reached a systematic understanding of productive relations, i.e., relations of workers to products, workers to workers, workers to bosses, man to factory, factory, factory to production process and finally, the relation of productive systems to society in general. To her credit, her eyes took in all the details of factory life and her heart understood the human pain embodied in labor. This is in part a reflection of her own physical awkwardness at labor, at her inability to meet piece-work quotas and her overall poor health. No one treated her humanely, hence the factory was inhuman. Her purpose then was to humanize the factory. We are reminded of contemporary efforts in America at self-management. While the efforts are laudable at a tactical level, if analysis is reduced to this level, it lacks depth.

Weil set out to dissect the "machine" of factory life: "Time and rhythm constitute the most important factor of the whole problem of work. Certainly it is not the work itself that is at issue."[25] The structure was viewed as problematic, hence the solution appeared to Simone to be a substitute structure. Never does she question the nature of structure *per se*, whether industrial, corporate, or bureaucratic.

A similiar logic is applied to her discussion of the Spanish Civil War. While her criticisms of both the left and right are excellent, she never focuses on the question of authoritarianism in both parties. Her explanation of the atrocities occurring on both sides was that war places people outside a moral order. Thus killing becomes easy. Here her insights are limited by her moralism. She fails to reach any definite understanding of the socialization of true believers of any cause and the nature of their committment to political ideals. It is precisely the belief in the absolute that justifies the implementation of any means to achieve said end. Simone Weil, revolted by what she observed, withdrew. The more important political question is why did the others remain. The answer cannot be formulated in simple moral terms.

To Weil, the factory reduced people to the status of slave. The visible signs of this servitude could be found in the prescence of time-clocks, in the pain suffered by workers stemming from the fact that they are not at home in their work, and in the orders issued by bosses which allow them to move workers about like inert objects. The division of

24. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
25. Simone Weil, "Factory Work," in *Politics* (Dec. 1946), p. 370.
26. Pétrement, *Simone Weil*, p. 373.

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labor in the factory was seen as the source of workers' alienation. The individual man was not allowed to view the production process as a whole but instead the worker is bound to service to a singular clog.

Workers are prevented by the factory setting from knowing what they produce and consequently experience the sensation of "not having produced, but of having been drained dry." As a consequence of Weil's perceptions, she seeks solutions that revolve around the integration of each worker into the system as a whole.

To be fair to Weil, the main body of her criticisms are profound. Her solutions, however, tend to be vague when dealing with anything but reformist measures. She entirely misses the point that factories are only one aspect of the social order. Reform which strives to make the factory more home-like ignores the pervasiveness of exploitation throughout all institutions in society. The evils of factory life occur not as the consequence of the work of immoral men, but as the logical expression of a capitalist social system. Weil's vision that "the factory ought to be a place, where for all the inevitability of physical and spiritual travail, working people can taste joy and nourish themselves on it"[26] relates to her earlier insistence that the central problem is how to make the masses (workers) happy, and not a problem of existence.

In Weil's plea for change, she addresses all her demands to the bosses rather than to the workers directly. Again, she reveals in this action her basic respect for authority. Similarly, in *The Need for Roots,* she includes order, obedience and hierarchism in her list of the soul's needs. In discussing obedience, she states: "It is of two kinds: obedience to established rules and obedience to human beings looked upon as leaders."[27] In discussing hierarchism, she states that "hierarchism is composed of a certain veneration, a certain devotion toward superiors, considered not as individuals but as symbols. . . they symbolize that realm situated above all men and whose expression in this world is made up of the obligations by each man to his fellow."[28] Her concern for order and authority are understandable in light of the chaotic times in which total change and disruption appeared imminent. Weil's personal experience in revolution led her to the conclusion that revolution increased misery rather than alleviating it. She was especially critical of the Soviet Union. And yet, paradoxically, her conservatism undermined her self-claimed role to serve the people. Still, it must be noted that Weil never retreated from a battle with what she perceived to be illegitimate power for her belief in authority transcended the temporal and political and pertained instead to the spiritual realm.

Weil supported the notion of private property to the extent that she included it as a basic human need. She states in her essay on factory work that "the perfect social organization would be one which, by juridical proprietorship and other means would give a proprietary feeling to all men."[29] She elaborates this theme in the *Need for Roots:* "Private property is a vital need of the soul. The soul feels isolated, lost, if it is not surrounded by objects which seem to it like an extension of bodily members. All men have an invincible inclination to appropriate in their own minds anything which over a long, uninterrupted period they have used for work, pleasure or necessities of life. . . . But where the feeling of appropriation doesn't coincide with any legally recognized proprietorship, men are continually exposed to extremely painful spiritual

27. Weil, *The Need for Roots,* p. 14.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
29. Weil, "Factory Work," p. 372.

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wrenches."[30] What is to be emphasized is the use of the work "legally." Weil can never seem to transcend her ideological bias in favor of established authority, law and order. She fails to analyse the nature of a social order founded on the principle of private property, where men confront each other as proprietors. Human relations are then mediated by things, objects, and as a consequence men never relate to each other on a purely human level.

Weil notes in her observations on factory work that "things play the role of men, and men the role of things." Here she touches upon the transformation of labor into a commodity which occurs in capitalist productive systems. While private property alone is not the cause of this objectification of man, it establishes a foundation for a set of social relations in which men view each other in terms of the things they possess. Rather than establishing a new order of relations, Weil is content to glorify the notion of man finding meaning in that which he owns. Furthermore, Weil does not acknowledge that men in factories are not simply engaged in the production of commodities but more importantly are forming social relations.

With regard to whether or not Russia was in fact a workers' state, Weil wrote the following analysis in an essay in "Prospects:" "Descartes used to say that a broken clock is not an exception to the laws governing clocks, but a different mechanism obeying its own laws; in the same way, we should regard the Stalin regime not as a workers' state out of order, but as a different social mechanism, whose definition is to be found in the gears from which it is composed and that functions to the nature of those gears."[31] The insight is brilliant. Still, Weil does not succeed either in penetrating the "mechanism" and exposing its "gears" or in applying this insight to her own analysis of the factory, or for French society in general. One cannot "humanize" work by simply uplifting the conditions of labor. The inhumanity of the work setting and of work in general is by definition the logical consequence of capitalism. To hope to change one factory without revolutionizing companion institutions can only be viewed as utopian naivete on Weil's part.

As Simone Weil grew through a tumultous historical period, especially during the years of German occupation, reflection on everyday life led to the awareness that there was no tangible sense to it. The central question for the intellectual is "Can one live an authentic life in a world that is inauthentic?" Kosik offers the following response: "He changes not the world but his attitude toward it. The existential modification is not a revolutionary transformation of the world in the drama of an individual in the world. In the existential modification the individual liberates himself from the inauthentic existence and chooses an authentic one among others."[32] Simone Weil, in facing the confrontation with authenticity, found her solution in turning to God. As a consequence, she failed to reach authenticity. Kosik states that "Gods exist only for those who recognize them."[33] The God-man relation is a social one in which man is the creator and God the product. In religion, the believer, in this case Simone, becomes absorbed in God. Hence one denies man. And in denying man, reality loses authenticity.

Sartre notes that the intellectual must forever struggle against the ideology which forever arises anew within him. He has two resources in his struggle: 1) perpetual self-criticism; 2) a concrete and unconditional alignment with the actions of the

30. Weil, *Need for Roots*, pp. 34-35.
31. Pétrement, *Simone Weil*, p. 190.
32. Kosik, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
33. *Ibid.*

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underprivileged.[34] In the second respect, Simone Weil never faltered. In the first, however, one might find fault. Simone Weil did engage in self-criticism, yet tended to focus on her physical self as opposed to the doctrine she espoused and was entrapped by. She was never gentle with her being. In fact, her major criticism of Alain was that he had rejected pain. This absorption in self obscured her real struggle, the struggle with God. She was never able to overcome her need for an assurance of absolute truth. After seeking it in all possible earthly avenues, she turned to that external to this world. Weil often stated that the proper function of the intellectual demanded total freedom. Perhaps for this reason, Simone was never baptized; she never became an official member of the Church. On this subject, she wrote the following in a letter on the eve of her departure from France in 1942. Weil states that Christianity was Catholic by right but not in fact: "So many things exist outside it (the Church), so many things that I love and do not want to give up, so many things that God loves, otherwise they would not be in existence. . . I remain with all those things that cannot enter the Church, the universal repository. . ."[35] In part, we find Simone Weil again asserting the supremacy of the "I" and exibiting her fear of the "we." But more than that, one should like to think that Weil could not reconcile herself to the historical reality of the Catholic Church anymore than she could to communism or conservative ideology. She was a hybrid. She thus retreated to a removed, detached God, passive in the affairs of men. She is aptly characterized by the saying, "sky bound was the mind, earth-bound the body rests."

It is interesting that Weil thought that T.E. Lawrence was the only famous man of all times whom she could wholeheartedly love and admire. Pétrement commented on this hero worship: "Lawrence had as his standards the same values in which she believed, and he nevertheless acted in a great heroic and glorious fashion. . . he could not act in perfect conformity with his standards; yet almost always he tried not to betray them any more than was necessary. And when he did betray, he was fully aware of it, recognizing it with an intellectual clarity even more heroic than his most heroic deeds."[36] Lawrence might reasonably appear to be a strange hero for a religious mystic. Yet the fashion in which he led his life—his involvement with the oppressed, his confrontation with the horrors of war and active participation therein, and his maintenance of values which gave him a mystical quality—were the very values and standards by which Simone tried to conduct her own life. But the people are not asking for martyrs, they are asking for liberation.

The contradictions with which Simone Weil struggled, specifically the realization of relativism and subjectivity coupled with an intense longing for the absolute, God, were the contradiction of her times. One can only speculate on her continued faith had she survived the war when seemingly all gods were doomed in its aftermath. However, her religious fervor had a more immediate impression on those who study her life.

Perhaps Weil's greatest weakness was her anti-humanism. She wrote once that she could not love her neighbor for she never wished affliction on someone else. She further comments: "One cannot fail more seriously in the second of the two essential commandments. And as to the first, I fail to observe it in still a more horrible manner, for every time I think of the crucifixion of Christ, I commit the sin of envy."[37] Had

34. Sartre, "A Plea for Intellectuals," in *op. cit.*, pp. 260-61.
35. Pétrement, *Simone Weil*, p. 466.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 344.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 466.

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Simone Weil loved herself more, she might have been able to look toward man as both the creator and object of existence. Given the historical time, it appears that Simone Weil wished to redeem her generation from their monstrous sins through her own death as she believed Jesus did for the world. As such, she deserves an epitath contained in a letter written by Johann Kepler before his death: "When the storm rages and the state is threatened by shipwreck, we can do nothing more noble than to lower the anchor of our studies into the ground of eternity." [38]

The study of Simone Weil's life and work contributes to our understanding of the decades between 1920 and 1943. She personally participated in or was familiar with the major events and ideologies that shaped the times. She examined each critically and rejected them all. No one label, conservative, socialist, revolutionary or individualist, could ever totally measure her committment to life. She was not a feminist though she was probably the leading female thinker of her day. One is tempted to say that she did not think of herself in gender terms, but only as spirit and intellect. Although one might claim she deserted man and turned to God in her thought and mind, her physical life belonged to the masses and oppressed everywhere.

Michele Garvin

38. Arthur Koestler, *The Watershed* (New York, 1960), p. 254.

Morris Dickstein. *Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties.* New York: Basic Books, 1977. 300 pages.

Now that the 1960s are over by all accounts, one does not have to defend or deny the past: political stagnation mitigates the need for and makes absurd an heroic history of the sixties. Still, an apologist history remains unwarranted. Disguised apology is the difficulty with *Gates of Eden*. Dickstein tries to write a history of the culture of the sixties that will win back the trust of his intellectual fathers. These men, the so-called New York Intellectuals, had disparaged the times. Dickstein uses their revered concept, modernism, to elevate the literature and, by the way of loose association, the "frustrated, Edenic impulse" and the "magic politics" of the sixties up to the level of academic texts. To accomplish this, Dickstein must defuse the disturbing qualities of the literature just as he must stress the impotence of the politics. What emerges from his book is a nostalgia-ridden portrait of the sixties as a democratic amalgam of an imaginary artistic avant-garde with an enervated counterculture.

Much of *Gates of Eden* is devoted to finding the points of transformation in the sensibilities of the later fifties to those in the early sixties. This construction gives Dickstein the chance to write dramatic history. The heroes of the book are the literary men who feel the "dialectical" pull in loyalties for these two times; the villains are those theoreticians who inspired the revolution in sensibilities but who withdrew their support when their words were put to practice. The characters of the political dialogue in the later part of the sixties are dismissed as self-annihilating babble-makers. The integrating device in the book is the development of Dickstein's own persona.

In this apparently solipsistic trick, however, Dickstein captures a truth about the sixties. For the hyperbole of rhetoric in the 1960s generated an illusion, a dramatic illusion, which suggested that any activity, no matter how inwardly directed, made people see themselves as actors in a political scenario. Those whose lives

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metamorphosed with the 1960s came to believe they participated in a universalizing process. They were caught in a collective error: from the premise that the self is a political entity, any group of individuals may seem to share a politicized experience; a jointly held experience belongs to the public arena; thus, psychological contests appear as political dramas. In the sixties, it was commonly presumed that auto-biography made history.

Morris Dickstein has written a political book not by virtue of his theoretical acumen or an allegiance to a revolutionary project, but by exemplifying the spirit of the 1960s that thought itself political. And he has written perhaps the first history of the art of the 1960s with the expressed desire to find a place for art in a social context. His insights are often interesting if not accurate; his style is lucid; his bibliography, useful. Rather than dismiss his book because his method confounds itself in its subject, it is better to consider *Gates of Eden* as representative of a critical sensibility very much like Dickstein's own description of Trilling's "still engaged critique of liberalism in the name of the imagination." From this perspective, we can see Dickstein's efforts to radicalize the Trilling tradition, to wrest it out of the hand of the cultural conservatists, as a failure and as proof of the inability of that tradition to find the social-political paradigms of artistic creation.

In focusing on literature, Dickstein of course is responding to his own interests rather than the larger culture's. It has often been said that literature was eclipsed in the sixties, and it does seem true that those who would have otherwise read fiction went to the movies instead. It isn't necessary, however, to fault Dickstein for what he chooses to ignore, as other reviewers have done, but to see if in fact, as Dickstein claims, literature can illuminate the progress of an ethos and if that ethos can be tied to the formal inventions of literature. His statement of intentions concludes with this ambition: "In method, I tried not only to respect these exigencies of form but to make them central to the subject, as historians and social scientists never do. My purpose was twofold: to show that cultural history can work from within the artistic and verbal imagination, and to ascertain whether criticism, which is often tempted to be hermetic, can tell us something about the real world" (p. xi).

The first task in such a project is to define the ethos and to trace its development. It is a task fraught with difficulties, and Dickstein falls immediately into a trap: he confuses ethos, or "spirit," with "meaning." "The spirit of the sixties witnessed the transformations of utopian religion into terms of secular humanism. Just as Hegel and Marx turned Christian eschatology—the faith in the progress of history towards a specific goal—into secular theories of social change, so the sixties translated the Edenic impulse once again into political terms" (p. viii).

Oddly enough, Dickstein's confusion has to be granted a kind of legitimacy. Many people in the 1960s did experience a kind of conversion reaction in committing themselves to actions in defiance of their own pasts. Nevertheless, it is the historian's job to examine the energy of this reaction without the burden of mystical thinking. Dickstein slides away from this responsibility by claiming that the word "spirit" in American history has rarely departed from its religious connotations. Therefore, he can allow a writer like himself, concerned with finding a cultural spirit, to be tempted by the feeling that he is on a spiritual quest, especially if the writer "was there."

Dickstein tries to control this temptation to self-examination and testimony by writing an intellectual history of the genesis of the 1960s from "loosely Hegelian" premises. With some relief we discover that Dickstein's thesis of edenic politics remains a metaphor he is graceful enough to belabor. Its main utility is to frame Dickstein's characterization of the fifties as a time of hard ironies that deplored utopianism clinging instead to a "fateful determinism that affirmed the obduracy of

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man's nature and his surroundings" (p. ix). By contrast, the edenic impulse of the sixties either caused or was created by rhetoric of human possibility. It fostered both revolutionary and reformist thinking but under conditions of spiritual fulfillment.

After describing the ethos of the 1960s, Dickstein shapes his story of the age around the fate of significant personalities, breakthrough sensibilities, shifts in consciousness as recorded in the arts and shifts in responses he recalls in himself. That these elements never do come together may not alarm Dickstein. He may mean to be no more than suggestive in the fashion of many other American literary critics who eschew theory and insist on the holistic value of occasional remarks. We are treated to an encapsulated view of Dickstein's progress towards intellectual and sexual maturity.

Dickstein remembers his adolescence as corresponding in time to an awakening in the fifties, the time of Mailer's "Advertisements," Marcuse's "Eros," Goodman's "Growing Up," And Brown's "Body." His young adulthood is initiated with Ginsberg's prophetic poetry reading at Columbia in 1958 as Ginsberg introduces the elements of conflict with older poetry. Dickstein matures suddenly with Mailer walking across the police no-entry lines at the Pentagon into a world of civil disobedience and commitment. In the incredibly short space of a year, Dickstein sees the movement cresting and falling; by August 1968 its self-destructive outlines were "visible with dismaying clarity" (p. 270). Just as quickly too, Dickstein is old enough to draw away from the new militants because he finds them insistant on living up to the charge of irrationalism. Appalled by the "babble of words" like "fascism, imperialism, neo-colonialism," Dickstein retreats into contemplative silence.

From the distance of the "torpid, constrictive climate of the '70s," the origin and the best contribution of the sixties seems to Dickstein to correspond to the posture of adversary modernism as praticed in literature. Speaking of the politicization of the counterculture, Dickstein states: "Between the malaise of feeling and a casual hedonism, between spiritual hunger and radical politics, the adversary ethos of modernism was becoming real, in the flesh, in a generation that found little in society to trust or believe" (p. 256).

Dickstein writes as if all members of the counterculture were somehow students of Trilling learning from that man a "more oblique engagement, modeled upon literature and the imagination" (p. 265). Dickstein's generous reading of Trilling's ambiguous relations with the Left need not be reviewed here beyond the point of concurring with Dickstein that Trilling's hesitancies and disavowals have yielded as important concepts as other writers' sweeping advocacies. Yet, in affirming Trilling's comment that the early demonstrators of the sixties were practicing modernism in the streets, Dickstein makes a poor choice. This conceit misleads him into believing he has found the key to identify the political component of culture. It allows him to take advantage of this importance the term modernism holds for literary critics and it allows him to re-emphasize the definition of modernism as that aesthetic characterized by an ever-present avant-garde. But it forces him to circumvent the term post-modernism. With that omission, Dickstein loses a good part of the specificity of the art of the 1960s as well as the politics.[1]

1. The term post-modernism has a checkered history, but Ihab Hassan has given it the most thoughtful and positive consideration. His analysis compares painfully with Dickstein's hurried dismissal of distinctions. In his book *Paracriticisms,* Hassan lists seven characteristics of the modernist aesthetic which changed significantly by the end of the 1960s. The urbanism, for example, of the earlier aesthetic became effused with Luddite fears and science-fiction imaginings, Dionysian eruptions and ecological protest. Technology in modernism was seen as "the extension, diffusion, and alienation of the human will, but it was also the means of the

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Unlike those critics who recognize the term post-modernism, Dickstein must insist that modernism has never left us from the beginning of the century. In the fifties, to be sure, art resembled the "wider currents of the age: ruminative, private, morally austere and self-consciously apolitical" (p. 50). The literary intellectuals of the fifties, "while maintaining the cult of alienation, simply abandoned politics to pursue private myths and fantasies, to devote their work to the closet intensities of the isolated self or the isolated personal relationships. . . The concept of alienation lost its social content" (p. 40). In losing its social content, Dickstein implies, the avant-garde was robbed of its thrust.

In tying the concept of modernism to the political potential of the literary avant-garde, Dickstein aligns himself with the almost forgotten arguments of the New York Intellectuals who once described modernism as the spirit of antagonism to bourgeois society. For these critics, the modernist artist had to be outside of society; his forms had to affront; he had to create an adversary culture. Dickstein departs from the New York Intellectuals in believing that modernism was not forever abandoned in the fifties.

Following the Second World War, according to the New York Intellectuals, the adversary ethic of modernism slipped into social acceptance. Literature changed from being alienated to being "accomodationist," a literature Marcus Klein portrays as existing "between the extremes of easy nihilism and a bland hopefulness." Klein defines accomodation as "restoration and love in their ordinary, painfully contingent instances;" the literature "makes up in plain necessity what it lacks in conscience."[2] The trouble was: "American fiction since World War II might indeed be defined in terms of the lack of cultural material it had to work with. As Henry James might have said, there has been: no puritanism, no Babbitry, no Booboisie, no Comstockery. No tyranny of ideology, no ideology at all in the proper sense, no hallowed patriotism, no Evangelical Christianity, no Prohibition, and scarcely any prohibitions, no prudery, no social complacency, no somnolent insularity. Worst still, it is conceivable that the energies of fiction in the earlier years of the century have dissipated into their own success."[3]

Perhaps, from the perspective of high-brow culture, this is an accurate description. But Dickstein doesn't remember the fifties that way. For him, they were pinched, repressive times when all those horrors were still very much prevalent. If in the fifties literary experimentation was no longer meeting resistance, it was because the impermeable air of classicism had settled on the critical response to the modernists. Readers were asked to put certain questions aside—especially questions about these

Cubist, Futurist and Dadaist movements to affirm the 20th century. In the post-modernist society, technology represented forces out of control with the media and the computer, brain technology, dominating human attention. The dehumanization of art in modernism, Hassan points out, was supported by crypto-fascist elitism, formalist irony, and sophisticated abstraction. In post-modernism, there was a searching for communal expression and a revulsion toward elitism. Irony in post-modernism became play and abstraction went the full limit to introduce a new concreteness. The primitivism of the modernists was toward the mythic. In the 1950s, this changed to the existential. In the 1960s, it turned psychedelic. In modernism, love became an "intimate of disease." In post-modernism, sex was either solipsist play or Reichian fulfillment. The antinomianism of the modernists changed from personal iconoclasm to mass protest, and the experimentalism of the modernists became more open in the work of the post-modernists to allow for simultaneism, play, parody and an increasing self-reflexiveness. Cf. Ihab Hassan, *Paracriticisms: Seven Speculations of the Times* (Urbana, Ill., 1975), pp. 50-58.

2. Marcus Klein, *After Alienation: American Novels in Mid-Century* (New York, 1962), p. 296.

3. Marcus Klein, *The American Novel since World War II* (Greenwich, Conn., 1969), p. 13.

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writers' political purposes and effects. The New Critics, the formalists, reinterpreted the role of the avant-garde as functioning only within the domain of *belles-lettres*. Consequently, the idea that the literary avant-garde was primarily concerned with social effrontery could barely be sustained in the fifties. Under the hands of the New Critics, art had become too private, too pure, and its audience too well assured of the avant-garde's contribution to high culture.

Dickstein reminds us, however, that modernism was still struggling in the fifties to win over the middle-brow culture of *Harpers, The Atlantic*, and *The New York Times Book Review*. In their "upbeat, cultivated, patriotic way," the middle-brow magazines were waging a "Thirty Years War" against modernism (p. 134). The sixties, Dickstein insists, shifted the defense of modernism away from the little magazines and the academic quarterlies which depended "for their morale on the Philistinism and neglect of the general culture." By making modernism into a popular expression, *The Village Voice* and *The New York Review of Books* began stealing the show away from *Kenyon Review* and *Partisan Review*. The old bastions of the elite culture had begun to crumble, according to Dickstein; the assumptions of the cultural hierarchy had been seriously undermined.

Of course, Dickstein's assertion that *The Village Voice* and *The New York Review of Books* represent popular expression begs our credulity; his telescoping of the cultural activity examined in these magazines into the bounds of modernism remains only the thinnest device to insert politics into this activity. It can be said, nevertheless, that art in the sixties began to be inspired by the American scene. This movement does contrast sharply with the trend in the firties and fifties when art seemingly turned its gaze away in disgust or back again with disgruntled aloofness to the "pop" culture. And for their part, more Americans, presumably the young makers of the "pop" culture, began to appreciate abstract artistic achievements. The striking increase in the building and attendance of galleries of modern art would be one example of this change. But Dickstein goes too far in suggesting that modernism was being championed by the crowd.[4]

Dickstein is forced to go this distance because he is still quarreling with his intellectual mentors, the New York Intellectuals. They had already suggested that

4. The popularizing of the art that had once been only for the cultural elite has been falsely understood as co-optation. The word co-optation should be reserved for the practice of the art commodity hawkers and the investment speculators. Something more subtle was taking place in the experience of art, something inevitably complicated by mass appeal, but not necessarily corrupted by it. Andy Warhol could consistently improvise on this new relation while the old culture guards fled the softening of distinctions and the shifting of cultural perspectives into the sanctuary of vague language about the arts' responsibilities and potentialities. It was easy enough to point to the arts' failings in those years and to cover this attack with exhortatory rhetoric of radical hope.

It is harder to assess the value of art if too many people rush to its acclaim. Where, one is tempted to ask, is the tension between contemporary consciousness and future liberated consciousness if we discover our own sensibilities too faithfully recorded or too readily delighted by this art? Has art abandoned its sacred purpose? Or in the language more suited to the times, has art sold out? Or worse, has it insidiously been frustrated by assimilation by technology? I would suggest that these questions, while not to be slighted, should be asked with another consideration in mind. The responsiveness or receptivity of a society for an art form changes with cultural conditions. In the 1960s, there was an eagerness to be in touch with what was happening culturally in a magnitude unaccustomed to in this country. Obviously, such enthusiasm encouraged dead-end efforts and ephemeral successes, just as it is obvious that enthusiasms are voracious and timely adjusted to new needs. The point is that neither social acceptance nor societal outrage is a fair measure of artistic value or revolutionary artistic purpose.

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modernism was becoming a pervasive aesthetic, and as purists their suspicions were aroused. For them, in this popularizing development, the ethos of modernism must have changed even if its stylistic substance did not. Modernism had become too easy, and, worse, it had assumed an air of gaiety. It died completely in the sixties just as Dickstein claims it was revived on the streets, or, better, reinvigorated by daily exercise. The old academic tameness of modernism, Dickstein delightedly points out, was destroyed and the "inner space of reflection gave way to the field of confrontation" (135).

The neatness of this epigram stems from the way confrontation was understood in the 1960s.[5] It was used to cover any kind of opposition, even simple self-examination. The word itself gave people permission to bring what was often shallow self-indulgence into the same range as political commitment. Significantly enough, this error does have its correspondence in the aesthetic of modernism. Modernism holds that the distinction between the making of an art piece and acting as an artist is annulled. Furthermore, in modernism, the receivers of art, the audience, are considered participants in the making of the art form. It was unquestioned that participatory events had the character of art. This tenet comes very close to saying that political activity can serve the same function as art, and vice versa, that art as "happenings" can serve as political activity. The ethos of modernism poses the danger of aestheticizing life. In this sense, modernism may have been practiced in the streets, but only to the detriment of political efficacy.

Dickstein almost entirely ignores the danger. He goes on to repeat the age's weakest presumptions: "More than at any time in recent decades, both art and politics became instruments of personal fulfillment, avenues of authentic selfhood" (p. 137). Self-confrontation means social confrontation, and one test for the validity of one's self-confrontation was the length one's efforts brought one to the making of an authentic personality.[6]

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5. Yet Dickstein can be forgiven to the extent that confrontation was a word repeated often in the 1960s and applied to nearly everything. Writers eager to seize the times stretched to find a language suitably dynamic. They sought out language to draw images of change; the sense of rapid change apparently left a more vivid impression for many writers than the harder to describe ideational conflicts. Still, there was an urgency to this language that went beyond the simple excitement of movement. The evocation of movement was a programmatic victory over the stasis that had set into technocracy's language, just as the willingness to explore images was a rebuke of the reprehensible misnomers the government used to name its actions in Vietnam. These euphemisms, as George Orwell stated, were designed to identify action without calling up an image. The language and images of change were part of the battle, the confrontation with officialdom.

6. In the early 1960s, there was a special cynicism inherited from the 1950s that despaired of overcoming alienation by immersing the self in the collective, radicalized activity. The dogma that alienation was the problem of the individual might be repeated but without force of the conviction. No one believed that there was an authentic radical activity in which to authenticate the self. Moreover, the early 1960s saw the appearance of aestheticians of self (one thinks of Brown, Laing, Sontag) who attempted a full account of the self as the center of being at the same time deying the 1950s accomodationist attitude toward society. They believed that alienation could be overcome, but only by completing it. At the bottom of the abyss, between the alienated self and the hypothetical true self, was either madness or absolute silence. But madness and silence are gestures, styles of being deliberately empty of content. They are impossible to achieve, so they become masks and performances. There was, as Trilling points out, a lie to the belief in the redemptive power of completed alienation. "It is characteristic of the intellectual life of our culture," Trilling writes, "that it fosters a form of assent which does not involve actual credence." Cf. *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), p. 171. The lie could not be sustained as the decade moved toward the "magic politics" of Ginsberg, a politics that Dickstein describes as "a politics of exorcism, celebration, and public joy. . . that belonged to the most appealing side

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Dickstein forgets that the quest for the authentic personality waned in the 1960s. One of the characteristics of the post-modernist movement was its recognition of the hopelessness of authentic protest against society. Thus, post-modernism is usually associated with the end of the avant-garde. What avant-garde remained frittered itself away in wooing the new. Ironically, the post-modernists, also called the experimentalists, flourished in this loosened grasp of authentic alienation. Other writers, however, the ones more identified with the 1950s, continued to worry about its disappearance. Dickstein is a writer of the 1950s who discovers one authenticating activity in the 1960s—writing oneself into history.

In choosing literature as his metaphor of culture, Dickstein is only extending his premise of personalism into the cultural history of the arts. Nevertheless, in doing so, he reiterates the process of personalism in counter-culture activism. For if style, gesture, and the pursuit of authenticity were anathema to political orthodoxy, they were germane at various times to the psychology of anti-social protest. As a cultural historian, Dickstein should have found means to credit the radical thrust of this psychology as well as to describe its limitations. The thrust does not come from the literati imposing themselves on society, and the limitations of their literature do not come from thematic irrelevance.

Throughout the decade, the literary community only occasionally responded to the call to be representative guides to praxis: there were manifestos and poetry readings and poetry dedications. For most writers, however, answering the call put them on a chase as ill-conceived as the pursuit of absolute silence or complete madness—the two demands of utter authenticity. Literature did find itself in a predicament of having its adversary role superseded by a culture galloping ahead of it. It needed new forms to express its own predicament.

One result in literature was the creation of an aesthetic badly named black humor, another was meta-fiction. The distinction is imprecise, for both forms were touched by the impulse to self-examination—the process by which the writer looks quizzically at his art's own laws and mirrors not society but the ways in which an individual objectifies his own alienation. The cultural historian needs to rescue meta-art from the attacks of the didacticists by analyzing the political import of its internal dialogue. Apparently, it is very difficult.[7]

It is relatively easy, on the other hand, to write such a history for the visual arts.[8]

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of the culture of the 1960s, its spiritual hunger and its spiritual comedy" (p. 27). Dickstein can describe the new politics, yet he doesn't recognize the change the new politics exercised on the pursuit of authenticity.

7. Critics who decry the loss of the actualizing individual in modernist fiction hold company with the conservative humanists who believe the individual to be the backbone of bourgeois idealism and history to be the confirmation of bourgeois rule. The problem with Marxists' preferences for the realist novel or with reading fiction as if it were reflection and argument is that this aesthetic no longer protests social conditions. Social realism is still determined formally by the context of the period of bourgeois ascendancy. By the 1960s the "compelling interplay of money, desire, ambition, social mobility, historical occasion, and class structure" (p. 142) that Dickstein describes has more the effect of comforting reassurance than unsettling exposé. In the face of half a century of modernist alienation, it is reassuring to be able to identify a man's motives, to judge his morals, to watch the forces of historical circumstance play upon his fate and character, to know that he exemplifies the strengths and weaknesses of his class. A writer can afford his reader this comfort only if he is willing to manipulate the realm of his fiction to recreate these social mechanisms. By the later part of the 1960s, the artists who still chose to write in this mode did so in protest of the radicalizing tendencies of the 1960s, as did Bellow and Malamud, for example.

8. The visual artists' attempt to devise a new language by investigating the basics of sensual

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But then, it is easier to accept the claim on the part of the visual artist that form is not a mere conveyor of content because the embodiment of their art in form is tangible. The visual artist can emphasize form thematically without renouncing the concrete. Literature cannot as freely shift away from representation; it is always tied to the corruption of contemporary discourse. There cannot be a radical literature of the 1960s that does not admit this fateful tie. Meta-fiction by definition concerns itself with the interaction between language and cultural opposition.[9]

By admitting no proscriptive political purpose to the inventive forms of the literature of the 1960s, Dickstein is left making literature merely emblematic of the changes he sees in the politics of the 1960s. He sees three phases, and he finds a literary representative for each one. The nascent, hopeful years of the Kennedy and early Johnson administrations carried off the literary prize of "structural" black humor in the art of Heller, Vonnegut and Pynchon. In the high phase, 1965-68, fiction suffered a decline in the presence of the rising influence of the New Journalism, rock lyrics and black-consciousness writings. The Weatherman phase of the end of the 1960s saw "guerrilla warfare in politics and art." Art in this last phase became abstract, depersonalized, detached from experience, "away from the personalism of anarchist politics" and toward a "Leninist" character. The writers of the last phase were the experimentalists or meta-fictionists: Nabakov, Barth, Coover, Wurlitzer, and the best of them—Barthelme.

Dickstein writes smoothly on these writers. He transmits a lulling quality with his gentle phrasing and breezy opinions that nearly obscures the airiness of his constructions and the idiosyncracies of his diatribes. His observations are too many to review separately, but generally it can be said that he evaluates books in terms of their authors' intentions and sympathies for larger cultural concerns. He frequently sounds his own ability to identify with the writer. For example, in his chapter on the writers of the 1940s (oddly emphasized in a book about the 1960s), Dickstein tells us that they remained "maudit and unfulfilled," suffering from forms too small for their big ideas. The Jewish novel of the 1950s, Dickstein states categorically, was an atonement for Jewish radicalism.

In his scheme, the rise of the 1960s' sensibility was supported by the dissidents' work of the 1950s, with roots in Trotsky, Reich, Weber, Herzen, and Kropotkin. Marcuse, Brown, Mills, Fiedler, Chase and Goodman brought the 1950s to the point of a breakthrough. Each of these is judged according to his tenacity and simplicity of convictions. Thus, Marcuse and Fiedler come under direct attack: Fiedler for his treacherous anti-communism and untimely machismo, Marcuse for his failure of faith and abstract, conservative elitism.

The breakthrough was realized when the comic-apocalyptic fiction writers turned around the belief that character is destiny and proclaimed instead that destiny makes character into a joke. Not all the black humorists deserve such credit. Those writers who concerned themselves only with the comic—especially the sick joke writers, Terry Southern, Philip Roth, Bruce Jay Friedman—"participated in the liberated spirit of

communication led to the readily identifiable forms that the critics call minimalist, op, and hard-edge. Then, it can be shown, artists attempted to defy the time and space boundaries of the museum-minded society with the invention of kinetic art. When that too was in danger of being co-opted by an object-made society, artists imagined the anti-commodity: conceptual art.

9. Dickstein is remiss in failing to demonstrate that in the play of fragments and the indulgence of incongruous juxtapositions typical of meta-fiction there is no simple escape from the connectedness of things. Rather, there is a disavowal of the commonly held presumptions about how things are connected.

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the 1960s" but made only marginal advances on the personal novel of the previous generation. It took the "structuralist" writers, the ones with the architectonic imaginations, to reinvent the historical novel, to "discover the joys and horrors of politics" even as they "were deeply skeptical" (p. 103). Apparently for Dickstein, subtlety of posture and alienation from modernity are virtues in fiction but limitations in the "empirical" disciplines of critical theory.

These structuralist comic-apocalyptic writers, Dickstein goes on to say, created the "fictional equivalents of utopian thinking." "With their maze of plots and complex fictional textures," the structuralists made "devious and inspired take-offs" on the "bizarre and extreme forms that public life can take, the subtle, insidious modes of determination it can impose" (p. 104). As examples of this mode, *Slaughterhouse V* and *Catch 22* are pivotal books. Because of their "peculiar structure in which everything is foreshadowed, everything happens at once, they are drenched in death on all sides like an epidemic that breaks out at once everywhere and at the same time" (p. 99). Contradicting this pessimism is the power of these books' stylistic inventions, their "creative will," as Dickstein calls it. Both books are so elaborately and originally constructed that they impel the reader into a made-up world where he comes to believe in the horrors of this life and in the power of the human imagination.

Dickstein doesn't make clear what he thinks about utopian thinking other than he likes its promising, uplift quality. This oversight weakens his argument because all fiction in that it is imaginative and therefore a demonstration of man's creative will is "utopian." Dickstein believes that he finds, nevertheless, ample evidence of utopianism in both the comic-apocalyptic writers and the political activists who were "determined to profit from the mistakes of the 1930s, and to cast both literature and politics in quite a different light" (p. 105).

This happy quality was not to last long, and Dickstein finds less attractive correspondences between the later 1960s writers and the later 1960s activists: their mutual disrespect for history and their heightened regard for paranoia. History was no longer the righteous mediator for either these writers or the young. On the contrary, these writers display "an anxious, dead-end feeling about history": time for these writers resolves nothing. It could not be counted on to absolve, defend or reward anyone. It could only be counted on to pull things apart: "Black humorist novels began with elaborate efforts to assimilate history—to shape it along lines of private mythology, public planning and the enlightened will.... But by the end of the 1960s this confidence was displaced by the sense that history was out of control.... Paranoia was the last fuel for direct action...the last gasp of a coherent worldview, which soon itself collapsed into fragments" (p. 127).

Despite its fragmenting effect, Dickstein asserts, nevertheless, that paranoia in the sensibility of the 1960s was a dynamic principle, an energizing force that could organize all "spheres of joyful or threatening about the central pulse of self." In politics, Dickstein says, the whole generation used its paranoid imagination "both as a rejection of the official culture and as a form of group solidarity" (p. 125). Furthermore, he says, that paranoia led to the better end of a "more fully authenticated life-possibility."[10]

10. Elizabeth Hardwick has also pointed out the basis in paranoia that sustains this literature. She complains that the far less attractive paranoid personality has replaced the guilty character as the central dramatic device in contemporary literature. To her eyes, the paranoid is not a character at all. "Most of all he comes to resemble a person with a cerebral stroke..." He reminds her, interestingly enough, of Agnew, "who roams the world without memory of alliteration, without a voice, born again in middle age as a baby, free of the 'role' that had first

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As difficult as it may be to comprehend Dickstein's enthusiasm for paranoia, a moment's reflection will recall that those writers of the 1960s clearly not inspired by paranoia, such as Sontag, were always considered coldly removed from the sensibilities they tried to describe. Those writers delighting the young generation—Kesey, Heller, Pynchon, Barth, Brautigan, Mailer, and others—indulged in a hotbed of universalized suspicion as the dramatic focus of their fiction, as a tension builder, prime mover, and truth revealer. When it can be said of their books that they achieved a denouement, the denouement confirmed the paranoid vision. Their characters flee, not because they are weak-willed or bad existentialists, but because they are panic-stricken realists.

Although he likes this fiction of engineered intensities, Dickstein still finds a social purpose in the more languid and obscure experimentalist writers. He calls them cultural archaeologists, plundering the artifacts of a civilization collapsed into fragments. Their work makes them delicate connoisseurs of the culture's dross and "dreck": its language, its commodities, its mixed-up human relationships, its exhaustion of means. Dickstein points out that these writers are burdened by the instability of the techniques of the avant-garde. It is difficult for them to develop their own and each other's formal inventions. They suffer even more, however, a "heavy price for satirizing this dross.... They fall into inaccessibility, abstraction or mere cleverness, substituting the dreck of literary self-consciousness for that of popular realism" (p. 219). The dreck of literary self-conscious nearly usurped the age as Dickstein's own prose and perspective testify; at least the experimentalists were ironically aware of their own complicity in the failure of literary language to go beyond self-consciousness.

In picking among these writers' strengths and weaknesses for signs of political awareness, Dickstein believes that he finds in Barthelme a subtle barometer of the political culture's advances and retreats. Despite Barthelme's sometimes impenetrable abstractions, he is seen as a political writer recreating in fiction a world "long since abandoned to the journalists and the historians" (p. 222). Barthelme needed, however, a "great subject, an immediate subject to draw him at least halfway out of his irony and aesthetic detachment. The feverish immediacy of life in the late 1960s.... worked [its] way into his fiction with a fascinating indirection..." (p. 246). The "feverish immediacy" of the late 1960s, Dickstein goes on to say, allows Barthelme to write his best fiction; his bad books follow the decline of culture. These parallels are arresting. Unfortunately for Dickstein's argument, publishing dates are deceptive and a career that spans only a few years has an uncertain trajectory. Moreover, the "fascinating indirection" with which Barthelme uses political themes makes analyzing the political content of those themes more difficult than Dickstein suggests. The fragments Barthelme employs and the irony he never does escape—an irony he himself agrees is a cheap victory—makes his writing more about political disillusion than political affirmation.

Dickstein has a stronger case in crediting the New Journalists for exemplifying the belief that self-confrontation in social confrontation. Therefore, for him, their efforts tie directly into the "high phase" of the 1960s—1965-68. The New Journalists redressed the lie of the factuality and the timidity of traditional, positivist journalism.

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brought him to attention in the first place as a *character*" freely "mutating like [Pynchon's] V—Veronica, Victoria, Venus, V-D." Elizabeth Hardwick, "The Fiction Break-up," *New York Review of Books,* Nov. 25, pp. 3-6.

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They did this by denying the omniscient authority of the writer and admitting subjectivity. In touch with the spirit of the age, they cherished immediacy over reflection, relied on personal testimony, and incorporated all—reader, reporter, participants—as "interested parties" to their accounts. The New Journalism actually recreated a new atmosphere for commentary, "an atmosphere of personal feeling, advocacy and opinion, novelistic characterization and description, touches of obscenity, concern with fashion and cultural change, and political savvy" (p. 133).

Dickstein takes most of his praises for the New Journalism out of Tom Wolfe's famous essay in his anthology, *The New Journalism*. Yet he says that Wolfe did a disservice to the good name of the New Journalists. Wolfe, according to Dickstein, directed a campaign against Mailerism, i.e., against making the writer the central character in the piece, against making journalism, in other words, into autobiography. Instead, Wolfe defined the new journalism as a plotless novel. Unfortunately, "Wolfe's pretentious claims make good magazine work seem disappointing like failed literature" (p. 139). Few of the writers in Wolfe's collection display the language or the dramatic sense of the good novelist, in Dickstein's opinion, and Wolfe may be the worst offender. Unlike a novelist, Wolfe homogenizes his characters into a single voice. Even in his own persona, he remains uncomfortably aloof from the event he witnesses. His greatest error is that he is attracted only to spectacle; hence, the 1960s became known through his efforts as spectacle, "where breathless excitement would obviate any taxing emotional claims and pump some life into his prose" (p. 139).

Dickstein curiously ignores Wolfe's more important claim that the New Journalists were the "proletarians of literature." Wolfe argues that in their hard-working efforts, the new journalists were performing the labor of cultural historians long since repudiated by the snobbish modernists. Dickstein tries to skirt Wolfe's claim by characterizing Wolfe simply as a writer of fashions who makes false distinctions between "manners and morals" and "political events." Wolfe makes this false distinction because he "has no notion of the kinds of social forces that impel both manners and morals and politics. . . [he has] no feel for what Trilling calls 'a culture's hum and buzz of implication' " (p. 143). Needless to say, it would be hard for any writer to discover implication from Trilling's description.[11]

Dickstein here falsely reduces the significance of fashion. He forgets that fashion in the 1960s reflected people's responses to extraordinary, time-compressed events. Fashion then was a way of expression the question, "Is society about to be made or about to fall apart?" When the Black Panthers threatened the social presumptions of their hosts, the glittering rich New York liberals, someone had to be there to record the "manners and morals of the day. Where, Wolfe rightly asks, were the novelists?

Wolfe's failure is a frame for Dickstein to hang his honorific reading of Mailer. Though not even Mailer, by the account Dickstein gives, was able to name the implicit "unity of mood and moral temper" by which "the style of confrontation in the politics of the 1960s is closely related to the style of self-assertion in the poetry and sexuality of the period, which in turn is related to the unexpected impulse of the journalist. . . to do his own thing in an authenticating subjective way" (p. 143). Yet Mailer acts on this style of confrontation, taking on all the above elements. If any man, then, were equal

11. Above Trilling's "buzz" and "hum" is supposed to be a purpose, a conviction or a new direction in culture. Who holds the convictions, and who determines the direction when all are making gestures of modernism? The question is fatuous because all are not making such gestures. In fact, there may be only a few, a few 1950s intellectuals subsumed by literary criticism.

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to the task of "determining *why* the whole culture should be moving in this direction," it would be Mailer. Unnoted by Dickstein, Mailer ostensibly fails at this task: there has yet to be such a determination. What Mailer does achieve in Dickstein's reading is a portrait of an artist who "makes the dialectic in his own divided nature his special subject and writes journalism that's a running autobiographical dialogue with the world" (p. 145).

Dickstein misjudges Mailer's well-publicized ambivalences. These ambivalences are as much a fictional device in Mailer's writing as they are a truth about his character. Dickstein emphasizes these ambivalences because he believes that to capture the 1960s it takes "a figure from the 1950s, someone caught between that hinterland of irony, ambivalence and reflection and the new culture" (p. 143). Dickstein decides that no observer worth listening to could look upon the mass gestures for peace without recording the contradictions within the movement as contradictions in his own reactions. The best observers, he then concludes, were the Old Leftists who had come through the iconoclasm of the 1950s by learning to "live with other expectations—only to see it [radicalism] reappear in a different and sometimes difficult guise" (p. 147).

Dickstein demands innate dramatic conflicts, dilemmas of old and new, personal conscience and public demeanor, of appeal and revulsion before he calls commentary good journalism. There has to be the "dialectic pull" inside the literary form for observation to seem like an authentic interaction with its subject. In this preference, Dickstein shows his loyalty to his own instincts as a man of the 1950s literary generation from whom there was no other ontology than dialectical existentialism.

Surprisingly, Dickstein does not include Sontag in his list of good journalists, for Sontag presents perhaps one of the most telling cases of a writer emerging from a period of "historical remission" of the late 1950s and early 1960s with the accoutrements of a novelistic and dialectical imagination.

Sontag entitles her essays from this period "Styles of Radical Will." The title refers to the process of essay-making as an exercise and as an example of a mental set, a set of arguments that structure an attitude that may nevertheless come to repudiate itself. This whole activity is a sensibility, a style. The title also extends to Sontag's person as an illustration of one of the ways intellectuals saw themselves as part of the movement. She documents her sense of belonging in a more honest fashion than Mailer. Her honesty is a hard-won battle to surmount ambituities. His ambiguities are too much a publicist's device because they energize him and his energy is his public mask. Mailer's persona as a journalist depends on his image as an individualist artist; Sontag writes from her sense of self as an intellectual, a critic, and a representative figure of the glut of Western complexity. She must negate herself while Mailer must continually affirm himself. Her willingness to attempt this makes her writing more strongly pulled by the "dialectical oppositions" that Dickstein so admires.

Her most famous piece of New Journalism, "Trip to Hanoi," is, significantly, in the form of a diary. It is more about the reluctant testing of reality and the conversion of values than a description of the presence of the author in a scene. Its structure spreads in time to recapitulate the process of radical conversion experienced by many others in the 1960s; its personalism comes to question itself as the purpose and chief metaphor of the radical movement.

Sontag states that she went to Hanoi with no clear purpose other than a promise to herself not to write about her experiences there. With the fact of a 70-page essay to the contrary, this disclaimer draws attention to itself. She explains that the role of the writer would have "shielded" her from her "ignorance": she wanted to assure herself

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that her discoveries were neither artful nor preconceived. Mailer would not understand this negation. But in the act of unburdening herself, in laying down the principles, forms and armor of the literary imagination and western intellectualism, she "unwittingly" allows them to become the subject of her essay. "Trip to Hanoi" becomes more than an investigation into cultural relativism, more than a song of praise for the Vietnamese; and more like meta-criticism, her most inspired form of self-reflection.

Motivated in part by curiosity and no doubt flattered by the invitation of the North Vietnamese, she undertook the journey at her own expense as a kind of pilgrimage of sorrow and penitence. It was a duty, "an important act of personal and political affirmation," needed because she had so far "been unable to incorporate into either her novels or essays my evolving radical political convictions and sense of moral dilemma at being a citizen of the American empire." Her problem was one of aesthetics: to find a way to bring moral dilemma and political conviction back into fictional form, to find out what was blocking that from occurring, to atone for her incapacity. Her impulse was the opposite Dickstein would describe for the New Journalists who simply extended fictional devices to politics.

Her honesty carried her further toward political awareness than had she been inspired by the aesthetics of modernism Dickstein continues to repeat was the fostering ethic of the age. Sontag discovers that the dichotomy between the personal and the public does not exist in Vietnam. She believes that this may partly account for the Vietnamese' "pragmatic, verbally and conceptually meager form of making their revolution...and may partly explain the amount of talk, often very interesting talk, that accompanies every revolutionary gesture" in the West. For talk is the "most intricately developed expression of private individuality." It can either be an aggressive act or an abortive embrace, but mostly it testifies to "the poverty or inhibitions of our feelings; it flourishes as a substitute for more organic connections between people."

From this observation, Sontag draws back to a larger statement on the function of rhetoric in political struggle. She concludes that polemical and analytical rhetoric is just the reason why revolutions in the West fail, particularly the revolutions of the young French and, by analogy, those of American students. Their ambitions were too much weighted down with symbolic gestures, too much about a-social activity meant to affront the body politic, too much in fact, although these are not Sontag's words, about the style of disengagement.

Coming from one of the chief American theoreticians of the vain, abstract, avant-garde meta-dialogue, this admonishment carries the double effect of authority and retraction. None of the other New Journalists were willing to pit themselves against themselves in this fashion.

Despite his protests to the contrary, Mailer heard the call to lend his celebrity to the public arena as the very call he had been waiting to hear. He is one of the few American authors who consistently announced his social engagement, who had a social project for his art: to change consciousness. His interpretation of his task did not include the possibility that history would change consciousness with only his anonymous participation. Consciousness would only change by making the personality into a fictionalized political act. His first commitment, then, was to his public image as author, combatant, egotist, and to his "sodden heart." He meant himself to be read by the style of his attack on his subject. But his sense of style was large enough to allow him to write a number of lengthy books and to find a viable compromise with his

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ambition. He invented a form he claimed was superior to history, the form he called the novel as history. The invention of this form, however, was justified to Mailer by the dimensions of the events, not just by the size of his ambition. He writes in *The Armies of the Night*: "...the mysteries of the events at the Pentagon cannot be developed by the methods of history—only the instincts of the novelist...the novel must replace history at precisely the point where experience is sufficiently emotional, spiritual, psychical, moral, existential or supernatural to expose the fact that the historian in pursuing the experience would be obliged to quit the clearly demarcated limits of historical inquiry." [12]

Mailer thought he had discovered a drama that brought him close to what was "happening" in America, and he thought it momentous enough to cover the range of all those adjectives of personal and social life. Perhaps he found the perfect parallel to act out the metaphors of his own discontent; perhaps he novelized his own character so that it only appears to be the case. Either way, apocalyptic language again seems appropriate to Mailer. America and her people seem to him to be on the brink of a profound change, a new birth, either of "fearsome totalitarianism" or a new world, "brave and tender, artful and wild."

The gentility of these mass demonstrations did suggest to some observers that the counter-culture had a will to innocence, or as Mailer describes it, a will to be born a new babe free from America's corruption, its exploitativeness, its cruelty. There were elements in the counter-culture that sought out not the truth hidden behind social complacency as much as the possibilities lying beyond society's culpability. But if this was a pastoral manifestation, then it was a highly variegated sort, easily attached in the same person to a defiant embracing of self-dissipation and decadence. If it was an Edenic impulse, then it suffered a particular frustration: its language could not be vulgar, sexy or violent enough to describe its own disaffection or premise its own utopian vision.

In plying his metaphors of religion, redemption and personalism in writing about the 1960s, Dickstein makes his attempt too to create a new form. Although his ambitions are quieter than Mailer's, he, too, writes cultural history as personal history, as an intellectual autobiography. Perhaps Dickstein doesn't realize it, but he made his own 1960s precocious autobiography like the ones he dismissed in *Gates of Eden*. We can be more generous than Dickstein is and credit the making of these autobiographies with a new sense of time peculiar to the 1960s as well as the swelling sense of self. Because in the 1960s, shifting commitments and the pressure of events caused their own demand to be recorded. The autobiography was at once a means of examining oneself and a means of documenting an age that was confusing, hurried, formative and seemingly about the young. Even as the participants in the dramas of the 1960s came to believe that the dramas were the harbinger of a new age, the participants also came to believe that this time was fragile and what was to follow was unknown. One could only be assured that one was there.

Dickstein was there as a man with the sense of being too old. He had accused his own literary mentors of being crippled by the sense of being too late to have participated in the 1930s; he is now guilty of an apologetic nostalgia for a time that was intolerant of nostalgia and that needed no apology. His sense of the times are much too attached to the spirit of the 1950s and the spirit of Trilling. His readings of literature remain too close to his own interests; his chapters on the rock culture and black literature, for

12. Norman Mailer, *The Armies of the Night* (New York, 1968), p. 284.

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example, are his weakest. In all, his analysis is infused with academic pretensions. We hear that the early 1960s enjoyed a "Whitmanesque expansion" on the 1950s' "Edwardian peace," that the Rolling Stones engaged in "Strindbergian" battle of the sexes. And his use of modernism as the link between artistic and political expression fails to describe either; worse, it obscures the distinctive qualities of the literature of the 1960s.

Finally, however, it is Dickstein's form that is the most troublesome. Autobiography is a viable and interesting genre, but as an instrument of historical interpretation it suffers gross limitations—self-absorption and narrowness of perspective are only two. Perhaps Dickstein hoped in using this form to avoid some of the risks of more traditional historiographies. Autobiography does help him avoid the trap of pluralism and the unwieldy machinery of theoretical monism; autobiography prevented him from giving to history a prominence and telos that some believed recapitulated bourgeois historicizing tendencies in the 1960s. But autobiography forced Dickstein to follow the age's shallow intellectual presumption that subjective appraisal and self-display could effect social attitudes if not social change.

There have been other eras similarly intrigued by their own energy and similarly disposed to claiming watershed events. There have been few periods, however, as aware of the need to be self-generating, to identify itself with a creative potential that would override the laws of history. Disparagers have called this phenomenon of the 1960s the apocalyptic mentality of a prolonged adolescence or the narcissistic mentality of pre-Oedipal stasis. Sympathizers have praised it as the progenitor of the free society even as they worried that it might represent co-opted regression. In Dickstein's book, we can see clearly the fate of the self-generating principle: it ends in political mystification.

Sohnya Sayres

George Bataille. *Story of the Eye*. Translated by Joachim Neugroschel. New York: Urizen Books, 1977. 120 pages. $5.95 cloth.

Whatever track history is on, the coach bearing French intellectuals always seems to be leaving the station as the coach bearing us is pulling in. Place, for example, George Bataille's erotic novel, *Story of the Eye*, first published in 1928, next to works by Hemingway and Fitzgerald from the same period. The comparison is less perverse than it sounds. *Story of the Eye* has the sanatoriums and the incest of *Tender is the Night*, the bullfights of *The Sun Also Rises*, and the international rich—found in both American novels—who cruise Europe for sexual adventure. But Bataille's bullfight is not Hemingway's: "First, Simone bit into one of the raw balls, to my dismay, then Granero advanced toward the bull, waving his scarlet cloth; finally, almost at once, Simone, with a blood-red face and a suffocating lewdness, uncovered her long white thighs up to her moist vulva, into which she slowly and surely fitted the second pale globule—Granero was thrown back by the bull and wedged against the balustrade... at the third blow, one horn plunged into the right eye and through the head." Fitzgerald's flaming adolescents, concerned about first-date tactics and fraternity pins, never burned with this kind of fire: "I ought to say that we were all very drunk

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and completely bowled over by what had been going on. The naked boy was being sucked by a girl. Simone, standing with her dress tucked up, was rubbing her bare cunt against the jerking-off wardrobe in which a girl was audibly jerking off with brutal gasps."

Hemingway and Fitzgerald are working on the surface, where sex is one feature of the terrain along with class, money and the rest. Bataille, barred—or liberated—from those zones by Balzac and Zola, has gone down into the volcano where the stuff that will cool and harden into institutions is still nameless and volatile. Bataille wants to preserve that namelessness and volatility. He does so by writing pornography. The erotic for him is not a buxom wench and a flagon of ale. Nietzsche, who influenced Bataille, called maturity that seriousness which we once had as children at play and Bataille's adolescents play their erotic games with an unnerving maturity. Pornography thus becomes a form that embodies primal mysteries.

At least that is the impression I get from remarks Bataille makes in appendices to *The Story of the Eye* that are included in this translation—appendices as remarkable as the novel itself. At one point, discussing the book's dominant images—eggs, eyes, testicles—he says: "This time I ventured to explain such extraordinary relations by assuming a profound region of my mind, where certain images coincide, the elementary ones, the completely obscene ones, i.e., the most scandalous, precisely those on which the conscious floats indefinitely, unable to endure them without an explosion or aberration."

Like a toreador, Bataille wanted to work as close in as he could to get to those images on which the conscious floats indefinitely. For he saw the conscious as part of a daylight world ruled by order, work, society and the rational. He opposed to that world things usually seen as opposed to each other: the sacred and the sexual, the exalted and the excremental, the spiritual and the feral. Working on the logic that says my enemy's enemy is my friend, he believed that if mystic transcendence and animality were both negations of a pragmatic, clock-punching world, then they must partake of each other. Man sets up taboos on all roads leading out of the sublunary world toward the other of the beast, saint or murderer since those states cannot be endured without dissolution. But if he can lose himself by going into the forbidden, if he stays at home in the quotidian he may have no self to lose. Thus, for Bataille, the artist has to reconnoitre the forbidden. He chose pornography as a mode in which he could discover images of the forbidden that could not be assimilated.

Or so he thought. One reason the forbidden is forbidden is that it burns up so much energy. It consumes money, people and the accumulated psychic resources that the world of work and organization demands be carefully and rationally allocated. Recall the fortunes as well as the energies that Sade's libertines dissipate in their pursuits. This expense of spirit with no thought for the future is one of the prerogatives Bataille gave to what he called sovereignty—a concept derived in part from Hegel's notion of the master. For Bataille, the sovereign's freedom to consume was above all things the freedom forbidden by bourgeois society. But in fact it is now what bourgeois society encourages. Today when bondage and discipline, mediation or a new stereo are offered as tonics to the troubled bureaucrat, *Story of the Eye*'s murderous eroticism may not be as indigestible as Bataille thought.

For certainly eroticism is being regarded suspiciously. As Foucault remarks in *Telos* (No. 32—Summer 1977): "A movement is taking shape today that seems to me to be reversing the trend of 'always more sex' and 'always more truth in sex,' which has enthralled us for centuries... as if an effort were being made, in depth, to shake this

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great 'sexography' which makes us try to decipher sex as the universal secret."

Indulgence may be simply a fallback system for control. If people can no longer be controlled by suppressing sex and then cultivating the guilt and fear that follow, then they can be addicted to pleasure.

Because he was reared in a Catholic culture, and even went through a personal struggle with Christianity in his youth, Bataille exaggerated the radical power of the obscene. His orgiastic episodes often take his characters to something like epileptic seizure. What makes these transports possible is the energy spent and released in breaking through awesome psychic-cultural barriers. But when the barriers become less awesome, and surely they have, then crossing them is anti-climactic, which accounts, I think, for the impassive, often banal quality of contemporary libertinage. Bataille insisted that acceptance disarmed a figure like Sade. "Those who saw Sade as a criminal were responding better to his intentions than his modern admirers are." A Sade, or a Manson, is not, according to Bataille, someone to be approved of or followed, but someone who teaches us about ourselves, who stretches our notion of the possible.

I wonder how durable Bataille's model is. He seems to be saying that alienation is a condition of being human, that the 'ordre quotidien' that stamps us with a coherent consciousness is like land the Dutch reclaim from the sea: painfully built up, artificial, and tenuously protected by dikes. But don't many people today feel that it is society that dissolves the self? Culture once stamped out identifies like a cookie cutter. You were controlled by your label: peasant, woman, sinner. But doesn't control work now by withholding identity? I am suggesting that Bataille's dramatic oppositions may be too dramatic.

A closer look at *Story of the Eye* will show what I mean. The book's narrator and his cousin Simone, both 16, are not just imitating adult sexuality; they are dethroning authority. When the narrator tries to rape Simone in her bed—and this is after they have long since been bringing each other to delirium by less conventional means—"She brusquely slips away: 'You're totally insane, little man,' she cried, 'I'm not interested—here in a bed like this, like a housewife and mother!' " After the parents invade the orgy scene referred to above, the narrator goes home, steals some money, takes a bath "in my father's bathroom"—the father is "the epitome of a senile Catholic general"—leaves with his father's pistol, and soon is "out in the open country." He moves in with Simone, who once urinates on her mother from the rafters where erotic experiments are going on. Next they free Marcelle, deranged by her unwilling participation in the orgy and since locked up, from a sanitorium. Marcelle hangs herself and our two adventurers set sail for Spain, where they come under the protection of a wealthy Englishman who assists and encourages them in a series of ourtages, culminating in the elaborately worked out rape and murder of a priest.

In other words, there is an unmistakable notion here of adolescent sexual energy as a radical force. But what kind of radical force? Consider the Englishman, always in the background with his chauffeured limousine, stepping forward to snip the ligaments holding the priest's eyeball with a pair of elegant little scissors. Here is the novel's last sentence: "On the fourth day, at Gibraltar, the Englishman purchased a yacht and we set sail toward new adventures with a crew of Negroes." The yacht and the Negroes give the game away, I think. Doesn't this sound like a parable of the way advanced capitalism manages certain energies instead of repressing them? Certainly the implacable Simone never sees Sir Edward as anything but an ally. Managing

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sexual energies may mean that authoritarian religions have to be thrown to the lions, but how much of a loss is that for the Sir Edwards?

William S. Burroughs' *The Wild Boys* treats adolescent sexuality and its disruptive potential in a much more serious way. Burroughs' packs of wild boys go beyond sexual rebellion to make new institutions with their own rituals and technologies. He is clearly talking about a kind of mutation and in doing so gives substance to that cliché "post-humanism." Bataille seems never to have thought about such a possibility. His characters are always contained within the European order they violate. If they escape they cease to exist.

As far as I can tell, however—his politics are as tangled as those of any French intellectual from his generation—Bataille was not trying to find the key to revolution in libidinal energy. He was obsessed by the violation of taboos and if that is a writer's obsession, then a figure like Sir Edward comes in handy. For Bataille, there had to be taboos and they had to be violated. Or, as Sollers says: "Bataille dit: il faut le système et il faut l'exces."

Whatever the merit or the meaning of Bataille's ideas, he found images for them in *The Story of the Eye* that may outlast interpretation. Sexual tastes vary, but I do not think that many readers will quickly forget the episode in which Simone, on a summer day in Southern France, wearing black silk stockings and a black pinafore with a starched white collar, her eyes fixed on the narrator, lowers her "burning buttocks," "pink and dark," slowly into a saucer of cold white milk.

Lem Coley

SCIENCE & SOCIETY

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The Formation of Marx's Theory of Crisis — *Makoto Itoh*

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Short Journal Reviews:*

AUTOGESTION ET SOCIALISME, 40 (March 1978)

12 avenue du Maine, Paris 15, France. 25 francs. A thematic issue whose immediate relevance has suffered from recent events. The subject: self-management and the French elections. FELIX GUATTARI, JACQUES JULLIARD, GEORGES LAPASSADE, *"Elections: piège ou médiation?"* Guattari, setting the tone for this free-wheeling and expansive debate, argues that the attention given to self-management by the left-wing parties does not in itself constitute any revolutionary opening, but may only demonstrate a concern for crisis management. The desire for radical change is manifest not at the political level as articulated by the party system, but at the social level as evidenced in a series of movements, none of which perceive either the need or desirability of designating the social totality as their sphere of action. Given that this split is overlaid by a split between the 'proletariat' and the 'fourth world' (unemployed, minorities, women, young, etc.), any debureaucratization achieved by the left-wing parties may easily result in a social order made more rigid by the "repressive majority." Despairing of the further evolution of the political sphere and the state, Guattari evokes a future society marked by the growing division between those involved in the production and technocracy and those on welfare. Faced with this argument, Julliard and Lapassade attempt to recover a concern for the political, for a theory and practice concerned with envisioning the whole of society. RENE LOURAU, *"Quelles nationalisations? ou: la courbure de la politique instituée."* Distinguishing between a nationalization that simply substitutes a national techno-bureaucracy for the multinational techno-bureaucracy and one that would democratize and socialize the state apparatus, the author concludes that only the non-institutionalized left is capable of the latter. ROBERT CHAPUIS, *"Autogestion nationale et socialisme autogestionnaire."* A high-ranking member of the Socialist Party argues that self-management has always been central to his party's platform and contrasts this with the opportunism of the Communist Party. GERARD FUCHS, *"Le parti socialiste et autogestion."* Another defense of the SP, this time with more emphasis on the history of the party's attitude to and diversity of opinion about self-management. YVON BOURDET, *" 'L'Autogestion nationale' selon le PCF ou les aventures d'une 'idée creuse'."* While formerly self-management was the major point of disagreement between the socialists and communists, the latter are now attempting to outbid the former in their allegiance to this idea. This rather sudden shift is explained in part by the CP's desire to distance itself from Eastern Europe, to incorporate some of the residual prestige of May '68, and to steal the SP's platform and therefore its originality. However, the author warns, the CP's interpretation of self-management does not question the role and internal organization of the Leninist party. Moreover, since the party advocates that candidates for self-management positions be pre-selected by the unions (the SP advocates pre-selection by the government), self-managed units, being under the control of predominantly Communist unions, would provide a weapon in any future struggle with the SP. SERGE-CHRISTOPHE KOLM, *"Autogestion ou réciprocité."* An interview with the author of *La Transition socialiste,* which begins with a discussion of the problems faced by the left once elected (e.g., economic chaos) and possible, albeit partial, solutions. Kolm then contrasts planning and market systems with a system of reciprocity (based on the gift relationship) and suggests institutional mediations by which the latter might be achieved. VIDEO OO, *"Communes: le temps de l'autogestion?"* Video-taped interviews with three mayors elected on the basis of local movements that challenged the formalistic aspects of the representative system. BS

CINE-TRACTS, 1:2 (Summer 1977)

4227 Esplanade, Montreal, Que. H2W 1T1, Canada. $10 per year (4 issues). Special issue on theoretical perspectives in cinema, published in collaboration with the Center for 20th-Century Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. STEPHEN HEATH, *"Film Performance."* Heath focuses on the process of representation, and in particular on the narrative representations of classical cinema. DAVID BORDWELL, *"Camera Movement and Cinematic Space."* Discussion of the perceptual factors involved in positioning the spectator before the image. Classical cinema relies on these perceptual cues to create the effect of a unified spectatorial position—a position that the avant-garde, in particular, seeks to undermine. PATRICIA MELLENCAMP, *"Spectacle and Spectator."* An examination of the conventions and operations of American musical comedies from 1933 to 1955. Mellencamp explores the extent to which the

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*Edited by John Fekete, English Department, Trent University, Peterborough, Ont. K9J 7B8, Canada. Contributors in this issue are: David Dickens, Sandie Estanek, Kermit Hummel, Mike Lacy, Tom Morris, Peter Murphy, Harland Prechel, Greg Renault, Robert Rucker, Jimmy Lee Shaw, Brian Singer, Susan Wheeler, and Nancy Wood.

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shift in the spectator's position counters or subverts the aims of the narrative. JEANNE ALLEN, *"Self-Reflexivity in Documentary."* Taking Roland Barthes' position that the technological diffusion of information tends to mask meaningful construction, Allen argues that the classical stance of neutrality or objectivity in documentary is highly problematic. BEN BREWSTER, *"The Fundamental Reproach."* An examination of Brecht's objection that cinematic performance necessarily separates the moments of production and consumption of the film. KRISTIN THOMPSON, *"The Concept of Cinematic Excess."* A hypothesis for a definition of excess against the view of the filmic text as a homogeneous system. CLAUDIA GORBMAN, *"Vigo-Jaubert."* An examination of several methodological problems in the analysis of film music in general and the relationship between film narrative and sound track in particular. JUDITH MAYNE, *"Kino-Truth and Kino-Praxis."* An analysis of Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* that argues that the film belongs in the category of political cinema, which not only self-consciously reflects its techno-ideological basis, but which is also conscious of being part of a political struggle. NW

CATALYST, Nos. 10-11 (Summer 1977)

Otonabee College, Trent University, Peterborough, Ont. Canada. $6 for 4 issues. CYNTHIA NELSON, VIRGINIA OLESEN, *"Veil of Illusion: A Critique of the Concept of Equality in Western Thought."* In a criticism of equality as a goal, the authors contend that the identification of inequality with oppression and equality with liberation is a viewpoint common to all brands of Western feminism—whether Marxist, liberal, or radical—and can be traced to 18th- and 19th-century rationalism, which defines equality as a moral value. As an alternative to a principle of equality—which in fact has come to mean identity (with men)—the authors offer the notion of *complementarity.* Even more problematic than this solution is their discussion of Islamic society (offered as an example of complementarity), which, through a policy of 'separate-but-equal,' seems to regard the social roles of men and women as the expression of their 'natural' inclinations. ANNETTE ALLEN, OSBORNE WIGGINS, *"The Feminist Critique of Self and Society: A Phenomenological Metacritique."* A critique of that objectivistic social science which naively assumes the possibilities of observation 'from the outside' of the social process. The authors recommend a critical examination of the self that must precede social investigation. Their four-step process, however, still assumes the cognitive autonomy of the questioning self and that objectivity can be observed untainted by the self so long as observation is first recognized as a difficulty. More rewarding is the discussion of the history of feminist attempts to refute and understand sexism: first, through the natural sciences (studies of biological sex differences); then through the social sciences (sociology and anthropology) by way of cross-cultural comparisons, then through literary criticism and, finally, through a critique of social scientific methodology, though not of social science itself. The authors conclude with a criticism of the feminist overconfidence in science as that which provides the most cognitively reliable interpretation of women and reality in general. MINA DAVIS CAULFIELD, *"Universal Sex Oppression? A Critique from Marxist Anthropology."* ELLEN LEWIN, *"Feminist Ideology and the Meaning of Work: The Case of Nursing."* A critique of what the author calls "androcentrist" concepts of work that persist in the feminist strategy of attempting to break down the sexual division of labor and end monosexual job ghettoes. Lewin contends that this assimilationist model of equality as well as a fundamental acceptance of "maleness" as a criterion for useful work for women are shared by all types of feminism, and operate to obscure the possibilities for female autonomy and job satisfaction that can be found in traditionally female occupations such as nursing. BARBARA EASTON, *"The Decline of Patriarchy and the Rise of Feminism: A Critique of Feminist Theory."* Why does the women's movement focus on patriarchy in the second half of the 20th century when patriarchy is on the decline? ALENA HEITLINGER, *"The Historical Development of European Socialist Feminism."* Changes in Marxist assumptions about gender differentiation, the types of Marxist revolutionary organizations and the place of women in them, and the question of a separate women's organization and the conflict between an independent women's movement and a single revolutionary party of the working class: these questions are examined with reference to the German Social Democratic Party, the Russian Bolshevik Party, the Second and Third Internationals, and the Czechoslovak Communist Party between the two World Wars.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENCE, Nos. 6-7

Dorrwar Bookstore, 22 Thayer Street, Providence, RI 02906. $5 for 4 issues. Issue theme. The origin of left culture in the United States: 1880-1940. CAROL POORE, *"German-American Socialist Culture;"* PAUL BUHLE, *"Yiddish Socialism: The Early Years"* and *"Debsian*

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Socialism;" SIRKKA TUOMI LEE, *"The Finns;"* MARIA WOROBY, *"Ukranian Radicals and Women;"* JOSEPH STIPANOVICH, *"South Slav Socialists;"* PAUL BUHLE *"The Twenties;"* PEGGY DENNIS, *"A Reminiscence;"* etc. This selection of materials from the early years of what can be called "radical popular culture" in the United States presents the story of how different peoples sought to create over several generations a better, more cooperative and personally fulfiling society. Commentaries on the documents and personal memoirs add to the many resource materials offered. PFM

INSURGENT SOCIOLOGIST, 7:4 (Fall 1977)

Department of Sociology, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403. $10 per year. AL GEDICKS, *"Raw Materials: The Achilles Heel of American Imperialism."* With increased demand for and lessened supply of mineral resources and the formation of producers' associations such as OPEC, the Third World ceases to be a supply of cheap raw material for the U.S. economy. This has prompted attempts by the U.S. to intensify colonial exploitation in Puerto Rico and on native American reservations, but such attempts have been resisted. THEOTONIA DOS SANTOS, *"Socialism and Fascism in Latin America Today."* Fascism in Latin America, as elsewhere, is described as a "totalitarian regime of big capital" administered by the petty bourgeoisie. The only "guarantee of victory" over fascism lies in the political organization of the proletariat and the "resolute action of the workers' movement." Bravo. GILBERT GONZALES, *"The Relationship between Monopoly Capitalism and Progressive Education."* An exegesis of the work of Dewey, James and Ross in relation to the class conflict of their time. Gonzales argues that progressivism was an attempt to control emergent class conflict. Extols Leninism. DOUG PATERSON, *"Popular Theater and Political Content."* "We need a popular theater with political content because the ruling class theater we now produce will not and cannot meet the real and genuine political needs of the American people." Takes one's breath away. JAMES THOMAS, *"Marx, Hegel and Dialectical Method."* Criticizing a previous IS article on the dialectic, Thomas argues for the similarity of the dialectic in Marx and Hegel, touching on such issues as materialism-idealism, dialectic as method vs. dialectic as ontology, and the vulgar Marxist distortions of dialectic. In HOWARD SHERMAN, *"Dialectic Method: A Reply,"* the first author reiterates the orthodox "scientific" position, culminating with an attack on the "convoluted" style of Thomas, the Frankfurt School, and the Telos Group! Also more notes, reviews and letters. MGL

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, 7:2 (Summer 1977)

M.E. Sharpe Inc., 901 N. Broadway, White Plains, NY 10603. $22.50 per year (4 issues). Issue theme: Studies in African urbanization: class formation." The issue editor, RICHARD LOBBAN, in his *"Introduction,"* stresses the "creative," "dialectical," "class-analytic" perspective in the four articles. BERNARD MAGUBANE, JOHN YRCHICK, *"The Political Economy of the City in South Africa."* The authors offer a class analysis that is refreshingly non-dogmatic. They focus on various strategies of labor control used in South Africa and the relation of these policies to the development of the city. PETER C.W. GUTKIND, *"The View from Below: Political Consciousness of the Urban Poor in Ibadan."* Despite occasional vaguely worshipful references to Lenin, this is generally a non-dogmatic if somewhat pedestrian piece of class analysis. Drawing from interviews he conducted, Gutkind describes the outlook of several segments of the poor of Ibadan (Nigeria), showing that they do display an understanding of their situation that could lead to significant change. A.S. OGANOVA, *"The Development of Awareness of Common Class Interests among the Urban Proletariat in the Countries of Tropical Africa."* This article only scratches the surface of the topic implied by the title. Meager argumentation and data, plus a strong does of Marxist-Leninist faith, are held out for the city as a "pot in which ethnic barriers melt as time passes." RICHARD LOBBAN, *"The Dialectics of Migration and Social Associations in the Urban Sudan."* Lobban, though gaily and briefly tossing about "dialectics" early in the paper, gives what is actually a traditional anthropological discussion of the content and process of a *Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft* transition in the urban Sudan. MGL

JUMP CUT, No. 15 (1977)

P.O. Box 865, Berkeley, CA 94701. $4 per year (6 issues). ROBERT STAM, *"The Subversive Charm of Alain Tanner."* Tanner's *Jonah Who Will Be 25 in the Year 2000* presents a critical analysis of political consciousness in the wake of the 1960s, stressing at all times the systematic nature of capitalist oppression. However, the film stands primarily as a strategy for political film-

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making. Moving beyond purely 'deconstructive' films into non-exploitative identification and self-critical narration, *Jonah* offers mass audiences the possibility of an active and critical participation in the reformulation of their desires. RENNY HARRIGAN, *"Women Oppressed!"* Based on 19th-century prose works by Kleist and Fontane, the films of Erich Rohmer (*The Marquise of O...*) and Rainer Fassbinder (*Effie Briest*) attempt to illustrate women's lack of choice in patriarchal society. Rohmer seeks primarily to entertain, thereby trivializing immanent social and sexual questions. By contrast, the content and structure of Fassbinder's film are implicit criticisms of the social and sexual order portrayed. LINDA GREENE, JOHN HESS, ROBIN LAKES, *"Subversive Charm Indeed!"* Beneath Jonah's immediate appeal lies a Rousseauean nostalgia that evades the responsibilities of committed political analysis. In particular, Tanner's treatment of women and immigrant workers and his failure to present collective forms of opposition to Swiss capitalism are seen as an indication of suspect political thinking. E. ANN KAPLAN, *"Harlan County, U.S.A., The Documentary Form."* Barbara Kopple's film of the miners' struggle often relies on realist conventions to structure its partisan argument. However, in disavowing a 'neutral' stance and refusing narrative closure, the film breaks through traditional documentary codes. JAN-CHRISTOPHER HORAK, *"Brecht vs. Pabst, Three Penny Opera."* This challenges the traditional view of the Brecht-Pabst controversy, which sees Brecht's avant-garde work drained of its revolutionary form and content by the bourgeois capitalist film industry. Brecht himself introduced significant structural and textual changes to the proposed film version upon which Pabst drew. Furthermore, the uneasy tension between Brecth's modernist and Marxist aesthetic and Pabst's commitment to realism makes their dispute more complex. RICHARD KAZIS, *"Benjamin's Age of Mechanical Reproduction."* Benjamin's materialist aesthetic is examined in light of the early influences of Jewish mysticism and his later friendships with Adorno and Brecht. In "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Benjamin indicates a desire to link the scientific and artistic realms and a concern for artistic democratization. MARTIN WALSH, *"Re-evaluating Rossellini."* Despite Rossellini's claim to an aesthetic of 'objectivity,' his films reveal a highly codified cinematic structure based on the illusionist conventions of dominant narrative cinema. Reliance on an unmediated 'reality' leads to the effacement of signifying activity and a minimization of the spectator's role in the production of meaning. NW

MARXISM TODAY, 22:2 (February 1978)

Central Books Ltd., 37 Gray Inn Road, London WC1X 8PS, England. 4.50 pounds per year. PAUL CORRIGAN, *"Strategy for a City."* A descriptive-historical account of the Labour Party and its role in the industrial city of Coventry. Promotes the outdated romantic idea of organizing the working class to overthrow monopoly capitalism in advanced industrial societies. JOHN MATHEWS, *"The Politics of the Energy Debate."* Focuses on the notion that "cheap energy" is a thing of the past and the "real economic issue" facing the industrial world is "mobilizing the resources to sustain a given level of population." Then analyzes the economic, social and military implications of developing various alternative energy resources. TONY BENN, *"Speech: Labour, the General Election and a Reform Programme."* A very brief history of the Labour Party and a proposed platform for the next general election. MIKE PRIOR, *"Discussion: Communist-Labour Relations."* Historical account of the Labour Party's approach to labor relations and a criticism of "Comrade" Priscott's views on the topic. Plus reviews. HP

MARXISM TODAY, 22:3 (March 1978)

ROBERT REINER, *"The Police, Class and Politics."* Argues that the police can serve socialist interests if there is a change in class alliances, which can be brought about by the democratization of the police. BETTY MATTHEWS, *"Notes on Democratic Struggle in the Transition to Socialism."* The democratization process achieved through elections promotes participation in the reorganization of economic and political institutions favorable to socialist development and power. JOSE CADEMARTORI, *"Some Political and Economic Problems in the Chilean Revolution 1970-1973."* Focuses on the revolutionary transformation of Chile to socialism by means of an alliance of the proletariat, middle strata and petty bourgeoisie. Criticizes Popular Unity for its unrealistic interpretation and management of the economy. IVOR MONTAGU, *"A Statue for Charlie."* Charlie Chaplin as creator and actor is immortalized in his own works. JLS

NEW GERMAN CRITIQUE, No. 12 (Fall 1977)

German Department, Box 413, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI 53201. $6 per year (3 issues). EDITORIAL, *"Germany's Danse Macabre."* An introduction to the following four

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articles on recent political and intellectual repression in the West Germany. Sees the generalized assault on oeft culture as being rooted in both a fear of confronting the past and a fetishism of the state. HERBERT MARCUSE, *"Murder is not a Political Weapon."* A critique of leftist terrorism that distinguishes it from genuine revolutionary politics as well as from the student movement. RUDI DUTSCHKE, *"Toward Clarifying Criticism of Terrorism."* Terrorism is not a tactic of the German New Left. JUERGEN HABERMAS, *"A Test for Popular Justice: The Accusations against the Intellectuals."* *Spiegel* article responding to government accusations that terrorism is a result of the teachings of the Frankfurt School. OSKAR NEGT, *"Terrorism and the German State's Absorption of Conflicts."* In the context of "state absorption of society," Negt sees the wave of repression as an attempt by conservative-authoritarian forces to regain the cultural hegemony lost in the 1960s. In such a situation, the interests of the left are linked to the preservation of civil liberties, coalition politics, and to forming a new public sphere. PAUL PICCONE, *"The Changing Functions of Critical Theory."* The one-dimensionality thesis of critical theory is said to be the product of the transitional phase between entrepreneurial and advanced capitalism. Ironically (given the content of the four previous articles), counter-productive bureaucratization is said to generate an "artificial negativity" that makes the gloomy vision of critical theory obsolete. DIANE WALDMAN, *"Critical Theory and Film: Adorno and 'The Culture Industry' Revisited."* A relatively competent critique of Adorno's attitude toward films as implied in the two culture industry essays; however, it is flawed by apparent ignorance of Eisler and Adorno's book on the subject, *Composing for the Films*, and by reliance on Martin Jay's rather than Buck-Morss's analysis. JUDITH MAYNE, *"Fassbinder and Spectatorship."* The potential of film for developing a radical critique is examined through an analysis of Fassbinder's film *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*. An immanent critique of melodrama is achieved through appropriation of the spectator relationship as a form of power. JACK ZIPES, *"The Political Dimensions of 'The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum'."* Böll's novel is contrasted with Schlöndorff's film adaptation in the context of West Germany. Böll's implicit critique of the German state and the mass media becomes explicit but over-simplified in the film. MICHAEL HAYS, *"Theater History and Practice: An Alternative View of Drama."* A seminal attempt to "show how the theater and theatrical process can be viewed as systems of signification which form a 'rhetoric' that describes the social configuration in which the theater of a given epoch develops." Social signification is examined at the levels of architecture, decor and costume, and acting style in 19th-century Germany in order to indicate what is necessary to reconstruct the total meaning of a theatrical event. ARNO PAUL, *"Children's Theater as People's Theater."* Sympathetic, thorough tracing of the history of the political-artistic projects of GRIPS. Paul examines questions of pedagogy, form, organization, music and interaction with schools. Primary and secondary bibliography included. HELEN FEHERVARY, *"Thomas Brasch: A Storyteller after Kafka."* Brasch's ultra-individualistic aversion to politics is seen as a rejection of the extreme Enlightenment rationality of East German Marxism in favor of Benjamin's eschatology and Kafka's existentialism. THOMAS BRASCH, *"Flies in my Face."* Previously untranslated short story. *"Interview with Thomas Brasch."* PETER UWE HOHENDAHL, *"Georg Lukács in the GDR: On Recent Developments in Literary Theory."* Lukács' fall from favor led to enrichment of theory. GR

PAUNCH, Nos. 44-45 (May 1976)

123 Woodward Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14214. BILL J. HARRELL, *"Marx and Critical Thought."* While Marx often assumes a normative sense of human nature, the fact that such assumptions are never adequately theorized by him helps to make his critique valuable to positivist input and highly deterministic formulations. For example, when freedom becomes linked with leisure (unalienated labor beyond necessity) and leisure in turn becomes contingent on rates of productivity, which thus gain priority in the theory, Marx's analysis opens the way to the productivist focus and contradicts the priority he gives to freedom and unalienating labor. There is a need, therefore, for critical thought not only to negate the negation but also to negate the given by a substantive determination of "positive possibilities" in human nature: a determination that will account for the historical dynamics of "contingent" and "ultimate" ends and which is grounded in sensual-consensual experience. As a start, Harrell posits "rational labor" (associated with craftsmanship) against Marx's implicit sacrifice of freedom to productivity and against the technology-centered determinism of the Frankfurt theorists. Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* is seen as exceptional in its commitment to developing a theory of species-being, while it is argued that his work after this study tends to confine the question of human needs to a "functional" analysis rather than, as Harrell wants, to a "teleological" analysis that would speak of socially

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conditioned (not created) needs that are sensually grounded, discoverable in part through cultural analysis, and essentially unchanging. A series of responses follows. RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA, in *"Commentary,"* faults Harrell for ignoring Marx's dual sense of labor and for not recognizing the positive element in Marx's negation of negation. ROLLO HANDY, *'Comments."* From a Deweyite position, Handy sees Harrell's work as another "quest for certainty" and prone to create pseudo-problems from its dependence on trans-historical models. BERNARD MURCHLAND, *"Yes, Virginia, There is a Human Nature."* Critique of voluntarist sense of freedom. KINGSLEY WIDMER, *"Culture and Alienated Work."* Criticism of Marcuse and Arendt on work, and of notions of "creative" work prevalent among intellectuals. JEREMY J. SHAPIRO, *"Species-being and Human Evolution."* Seeks to ground discussion of contradiction between human nature and its historical distortion in Marx's notion of the species' embeddedness in nature and its overcoming, in recent evolutionary theory, and in Habermas' theory of communication. CARMEN SIRIANNI, *"On Freedom and Utopia."* Furthers Harrell's critique of productivist orientation of Marx, while questioning through Habermas the emphasis on the sensual and the "highly unrealistic" conception of productive activity proposed by Harrell. ARTHUR EFRON, *"Toward a Dialectic of Sensuality and Work."* Editor's response to commentaries. Drawing on Reich and D.H. Lawrence, a criticism of the avoidance in the responses and the tradition of critical thought generally of body-based judgments of work, language and sexuality. Radical thought traditionally arrives at "a top-heavy freedom that forgets the lived body." HARRELL, *"Reply and Development."* Criticism of pragmatism's refusal to investigate the primary nature of the subject and subjectivity. Further develops the concept of rational labor (through the concept of "efficacy" in experience) in contrast to what is seen as Habermas' limiting of work to its technical function and his displacing of the category of experience away from sensuality toward a limiting and false cultural determinism. TM

PAUNCH, Nos. 50-51 (January 1978)

DAVID BOADELLA, *"The Spiral Flame: A Study in the Meaning of D.H. Lawrence."* A reprint of a 1952 Reichian study of Lawrence's ideas and the evolution of his body thematic in the fiction. This is still the only extended, comparative work of its kind in print in English and still, after several hundred volumes of criticism, one of the most non-mystifying and sensitive introductions to Lawrence's concern with the body. The first half compares Reich's theories, which are offered unquestioned, with Lawrence's theoretical writings up to the early 1920s. The second half is a survey of the body thematic as it develops in the major novels from the early rendering of non-fulfillment, through the shift in concern toward male separateness and power, toward fulfillment in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The major limitation of the study, evident somewhat in Reich and in all emphases on the body thematic in Lawrence, is the failure to analyze in depth the *dynamic* and problematic interchange between the individual and society, a failure often evident in Lawrence's expository prose but far less in evidence in the fiction. None of his early theory is linked to World War I or to the modernist development of mass culture against which it is, in part, a reaction. Nor are the following issues dealt with adequately: the historical antagonism between social consciousness as defensively armored and individual consciousness as potentially vital and open (deeply troublesome for many of Lawrence's male characters), the consequences of an impoverished work-life for the relational body-life (evident particularly in *The Rainbow*), the body-centering of the project of renewal in the midst of an unrenewed society, and the making of body-fulfillment a last and hence highly conditioned recourse for renewal (even granted its intrinsic value), while the vision would make of it a primary, a-social source of renewal. The effect of Boadella's study is to confirm, without the usual uncomprehending abstruseness, Lawrence's "there's nothing to change except inside ourselves," while Lawrence himself, in his later theory and throughout his fiction, obstinately clings to both the truth and problematic untruth of such an affirmation. TM

PHILOSOPHY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES, 7:4 (December 1977)

Wilfred Laurier University Press, Waterloo, Ont. N2L 3C5, Canada. $15 per year (4 issues). JEFF COULTER, *"Transparence of Mind: The Availability of Subjective Phenomena."* Argues for a sociological approach to subjectivity. Ryle and Wittgenstein are seen as providing a point of departure for criticizing "neo-mentalist" perspectives such as Fodor, Katz and Harrison. A notion of the "mundane world of everyday interaction" and a quick 'what-they-really-meant' reading of Blum and McHugh provide the groundwork for Coulter's project. JOHN KEKES, *"Rationality and Problem Solving."* A head-in-the-sand defense of an "external standard of rationality which is neither arbitrary nor question-begging." The external criterion is "problem solving." But this, of course, must not simply be pragmatism. TERRY M. GOODE, *"Explanation, Expansion and*

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the Aims of Historians: Toward an Alternative Account of Historical Explanation." Goode criticizes Hempel and offers the notion of "singular explanatory hypotheses" as an alternative. ULRICH STEINVORTH, *"Marx's Theory of Value."* Vol. I and III of *Capital* are inconsistent. The theory of Vol. I fits the facts better than Vol. III, the author says, and is consistent with subjective theories of value. JOHN YOLTON, *"G.H. von Wright's Account of Causing and Producing."* A review article of *Essays on Explanation and Understanding, Studies in the Foundations of Humanities and Social Sciences,* edited by Manninen and Tuomela. KMH

POLITICS AND SOCIETY, 7:2 (1977)

Geron-X Inc., Box 1108, Los Altos, Calif. 94022. $9.50 for 4 issues. AL GEDICS, *"Ethnicity, Class Solidarity and Labor Radicalism among Finnish Immigrants in Michigan Copper Country."* Argues that the emergence of radicalism among miners in Michigan copper country is incomprehensible apart from an analysis of the specific historical developments of capitalist social relations in the Lake Superior mining district. ROBERT GOLDMANN, JOHN WILSON, *"The Rationalization of Leisure."* As part of a general reorientation to the phenomenon of leisure stimulated by three principal concerns (technical efficiency, control over the production process, and the maintenance of legitimacy), the industrial recreation programs provided by management were designed to integrate structurally and ideologically the working man's leisure into the needs of corporate capital. JAY R. MANDLE, *"Problems of the Non-capitalist Path of Development in Guyana and Hamaica."* PIERS BEIRNE, *"Introduction to 'Juridical Socialism.'* FRIEDRICH ENGELS, KARL KAUTSKY, *"Juridical Socialism."* As one of a series of articles published during the 1880s in *Die Neue Zeit* in the attempt to confront the analysis of political economy emanating from reformist tendencies in German Social Democracy, this article outlines the contradictions involved in the legalistic demands for social reform made by the Austrian jurist Anton Menger. SAM ROSENBERG, *"The Marxian Reserve Army of Labor and the Dual Labor Market."* Dual labor market analysis is synthesized with Marx's ideas concerning the reserve army. The results suggest that the barrier preventing secondary workers from gaining primary employment is the lack of primary employment, not their work habits. PFM

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT, 1:1 (1978)

International Universities Press, 315 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016. $30 per year (4 issues). A new journal intending to publish original contributions to psychoanalysis (clinical, theoretical, experimental, quantitative), with a focus on interdisciplinary studies integrating psychoanalysis with other disciplines. Though primarily intended for institutional libraries, it is possible that this journal will serve as a forum for genuine investigative studies. ROY SCHAFER, *"Conflict as Paradoxical Actions."* Schafer applies the "action language" proposed in his recent book, *A New Language for Psychoanalysis,* to the study of conflict. Though (like anti-psychiatry) he wants to move away from the traditional Freudian reductionist and determinist metapsychology, by doing so through the use of new terms emphasizing the self-constituting nature of the analysand, Schafer's abstract negation does so at the cost of sacrificing the concept of the repressed unconscious. JOEL KOVEL, *"Things and Words: Metapsychology and the Historical Point of View."* Basically an attempt to integrate Marxist concepts with modified psychoanalytic metatheory, the article oscillates between banality, brilliance and unquestioned acceptance of psychoanalytic therapy. By way of a critical survey of the literature concerning the separation of metapsychology from psychology (including the Schafer book mentioned above), Kovel argues for the need for metapsychology, then for a form of psychoanalytic discourse that emphasizes the social, intersubjective constitution of a person, to complement prevalent natural-science discourse. The distinction between thing and word presentations in analysis reveals the presence of the unconscious, while the "historical point of view," drawing on Marxist theory, illuminates social determinants of meaning. LOUIS BERGER, *"Innate Constraints of Formal Theories."* HOWARD F. STEIN, SOUGHIK KAYZAKIAN-ROWE, *"Hypertension, Biofeedback and the Myth of the Machine: A Psychoanalytic-Cultural Exploration."* NORBERT FREEDMAN, *et al., "The Body Manifestations of Listening."* GR

QUEST: A FEMINIST QUARTERLY, 4:1 (Summer 1977)

P.O. Box 8843, Washington, DC 20003. $9 per year (4 issues). *"Report to our Readers."* Includes readership profile. HEALTH CENTER STAFF, *"A Report from Women's Community Health Center."* ALESIA KUNZ, *"From Self-Containment to Insidiousness."* Means, ends and style. CHRISTINE PATTEE, *"The Death of a Dream: Failure of a Feminist Credit Union."* JACKIE MacMILLAN, *"Prostitution as Sexual Politics."* Critique of the two prevailing feminist views of prostitution (either as extreme degradation forced by dire necessity, or as strictly a matter of

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personal choice in the exercise of civil rights under free market conditions). The author argues in favor of decriminalization in the short term and the eventual elimination of prostitution through radical social change. BARBARA DEMING, *"Remembering Who We Are."* An open letter to Susan Saxe. Speculations on the role of sexuality in the development of culture and a critique of the Marxist preoccupation with production and exchange. MAY SCHNEIDT, *"Challenging Assertiveness Training."* Self-hatred turned outward onto others destroys trust and hides an inauthentic self behind aggressive actions. RED APPLE COLLECTIVE, *"Women's Unions and Socialist Feminism."* An attempt to understand the apparent failure of socialist-feminism in both its organizational and political forms. SW

QUEST: A FEMINIST QUARTERLY, 4:2 (Winter 1977–78)

Issue theme: International feminism. CHARLOTTE BUNCH, *"An Introduction."* DEVAKI JAIN, *"Can Feminism be a Global Ideology?"* The author raises questions about the applicability of certain aspects of Western feminism (e.g., wages for housework and anti-male sentiments) that might be inappropriate for non-industrial nations, either because of poverty or because they are contradicted by firmly established cultural and religious attitudes. The author concludes that the process of economic development risks the further aggravation of sexual inequality unless women are politically autonomous. In other words, feminist separatism may be an acceptable first step, though not a goal, of women in non-industrialized nations. ANJA MEULENBELT, *"On the Political Economy of Domestic Labor."* A recycling of standard arguments about the place of domestic labor in capitalism: is it a pre-capitalist vestige or the disguised but essential underside of the wage relation? Is it productive or unproductive? The author attempts to straddle the gap between Marxism and feminism. STEPHANIE URDANG, *"Women in the Guinea-Bisseau Revolution." "In Brief."* Short notes on Brazil, France and Israel. ELIZABETH REID, *"Women, Economic Development and the U.N."* A discussion of the significance of the call for a new economic order (brought to the United Nations by developing countries) for feminist concerns for the emancipation of women; specifically, the relevance of demands for agricultural reform and increased industrialization. FJUIEDA MIOKO, IIJIMA AIKO, *"Japanese Women Speak Out."* Brief histories of the Japanese women's movement and government policy on women's issues. JANE FLAX, *"A Look at the Cuban Family Code."* DOROTHY ALLISON, *"Feminist and Women's Resources and Publications."* Bibliography of publications from outside the U.S. NAWAL EL SADAWI, FATIMA MERNISSI, MALLICA VAJARATHON, *"A Critical Look at the Wellesley Conference."* This critique of the 1976 Conference on Women and Development held at Wellesley College is primarily concerned with the preponderance of papers by Americans about women in Third World countries (rather than about American women) and with the uncritical use of economic and technological criteria for measuring development to the exclusion of other criteria concerning human growth and well-being. DIANA RUSSELL, *"A Commentary on the International Tribunal."* Discussion of the First International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women. SW

RADICAL AMERICA, 12:1 (Winter 1977-1978)

P.O. Box BN, Cambridge, MA 02104. $8 for 4 issues. LINDA GORDON, ALLEN HUNTER, *"Sex, Family and the New Right: Anti-feminism as a Political Force."* The present right-wing offensive aimed at "quality of life" issues is seen as both a backlash against the women's and gay liberation movements, as well as a reassertion of patriarchal forms of family structure and male dominance. JIM O'BRIEN, *"American Leninism in the 1970s."* An outline history of the major Leninist organizations in the 1970s and an initial assessment of their successes and failures. Aims for an overall picture of the growth, transformation and actual contributions of both the Marxist-Leninist organizations that emerged from the New Left in the late 1960s and those older Leninist organizations that were partly influenced by this upsurge. MIRIAM GOODMAN, *"Industrial Park Poems: 'Free Enterprise,' 'Sharing an Office,' and 'Cafeteria'."* SUZANNE COWAN, *"The Unhappy Adventures of 'Alice' in Blunderland: Counter-culture, Revolt and Repression in the Heart of Italy's 'Red Belt'."* Examines the role of a "free radio station" in the March 1977 student uprising in Bologna and stresses the importance of revolutionary communications in a revolutionary situation. DAVID HUNT *"Remembering the Tet Offensive."* Commemorates the 10th anniversary of the Tet offensive. Filled with detail, Hunt's article "puts concrete meaning and understanding into the belief that the National Liberation Front employed a 'socialist' military strategy that was far different from and superior to the capital-intensive strategy employed by the United States and South Vietnamese forces." CARL BOGGS, *"Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control."* What is meant by prefigurative communism are those political traditions that attempt to embody, or "prefigure,"

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within their own organizations some of the social relations that a socialist revolution would bring. Three examples are analyzed: the soviet movement in Russia at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution and for a few years thereafter; the federation of councils in Germany in 1918; and the factory council movement in Italy from 1918-1920. All of these movements fell apart or were crushed, and Boggs is careful to explain the particulars of each movement's historical situation as it affected both the precise nature of their politics and organization and their demise. PFM

RADICAL PHILOSOPHY, No. 18 (Autumn 1977)

40 Langdon Park Road, London N6 5QG, England. $7.50 for 3 issues. RIP BULKELEY, *"On 'On Practice'."* Western Maoism is seen as one form of the protest ideology generically known as populism. PETER DEWS, *"Misadventures of the Dialectic."* Responding initially to the ideas on dialectic and social science developed by Roy Edgley in articles published recently by *Radical Philosophy* and *Critique*, Dews defends some of Lucio Colletti's main positions. Edgley's conception of a dialectical Marxist social science is seen to represent merely one more attempt to give the concepts of the dialectic some kind of acceptable content. ANDREW COLLIER, *"Freedom as the Efficacy of Knowledge."* Though primarily concerned with freedom in a metaphysical sense and not with political freedom, Collier examines the relation of theoretical support between the two. Rejecting both the neo-liberal notions of purely negative liberty (which rule out only deliberate interference) and the idealist notions (which permit expressions such as "being compelled to be free"), political freedom is identified with the power to get what one wants, to remove obstacles to satisfaction. PFM

SEMIOTEXT(E), 3:1 (1978)

522 Philosophy Hall, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027. $7.50 for 3 issues. Issue theme: Nietzsche's return. JAMES LEIGH, *"Free Nietzsche."* Nietzsche as a clarion of counter-culture. ROGER McKEON, *"Gaiety, A Difficult Science."* Assertion of sovereign multiplicity of interpretations to avoid "the hoarding insanity of concept." GILLES DELEUZE, *"Nomad Thought."* Nietzsche claimed a "right to misinterpretation;" his anti-system transcends Marxism and Freudianism as the bureaucratization of public and private life through recoding. Nietzsche used existing codes to introduce what cannot be coded, thus creating style as politics, the aphorism as a nomadic play of forces. The humor and irony in Nietzsche's counter-philosophic discourse makes his method revolutionary. KENNETH KING, *"The Dancing Philosopher."* "Dancing is pure becoming." JOHN CAGE, DANIEL CHARLES, *"For the Birds."* Interview: concrete music. JEAN-FRANCOIS LYOTARD, *"Notes on the Return and Capital."* Philosophy is identitarian, capital is the eternal return; Cage is Nietzschean music. The nomadic absence of representation in Nietzsche points to a non-authoritarian thought and politics, a Dionysian affirmation of libidinal economics. SYLVERE LOTRINGER, *"The Dance of Signs."* Advocates an aesthetic of dream-text immediacy. FRANCOIS FOURQUET, *"Libidinal Nietzsche."* Through Nietzsche, libidinal complexes can be seen as dimensions of a non-representational will to power (desire), and the mode of production as basic libidinal activity. MICHEL FOUCAULT, *"Nietzsche, Genealogy, History."* This essay from *Language, Counter-memory, Practice* focuses on genealogy as non-identitarian history. The notion emerges in Nietzsche's use of terms: he avoids the search for origins in essences, seeing beginnings as disparate. Descent or development or emergence reveals the concrete play of forces at work in generation. Foucault argues that Nietzsche's genealogical history constructs a counter-memory by being parodic (against reality), dissociative (against identity), and sacrificial (against truth). JOHN RAJCHMAN, *"Nietzsche, Foucault and the Anarchism of Power."* A discussion of Nietzschean principles in Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*: the treatment of power misses Nietzsche's artistic politics. LEE HISDRETH, *"An Authentic Reader."* GEORGES BATAILLE, *"Nietzsche and the Fascists."* 1937 article protesting the use of Nietzsche by the Nazis: Nietzsche addressed free spirits, not followers, and wrote puzzles requiring active engagement, not directives. GEORGE BATAILLE, *"Nietzsche in the Light of Marxism."* Nietzsche is seen as a necessary complement to communism in this 1951 article. DENIS HOLLIER, *"Hegel's Fool."* Discussion of Bataille's interpretation of Hegel and Nietzsche: Hegel's sublation and Nietzsche's repetition become unified in the "sublation of sublation." JACQUES DERRIDA, *"Becoming Woman."* For Nietzsche, truth is like woman, with no fixed identity—a dionysiac. PIERRE KLOSSOWSKI, *"Forgetting and Anamnesis in the Experience of the Eternal Return of the Same."* MARTIN AVILLEZ, *"My Life, by Friedrich Nietzsche."* Cartoon biography utilizing quotes from forgery done by Elisabeth Nietzsche. GR

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SIGNS: JOURNAL OF WOMEN IN CULTURE AND SOCIETY, 3:2 (Winter 1977)
University of Chicago Press, 11030 Langley Avenue, Chicago, IL 60628. Student subscription: $9.50. DIANE K. LEWIS, *"A Response to Inequality: Black Women, Racism and Sexism."* Lewis tries to "explain the initial rejection and then more favorable reaction to the women's movement on the part of black women." She criticizes feminist frameworks such as Rosaldo and Lamphere's *Women, Culture and Society* as not speaking to black women because they do not take into account the overlapping structures of racism and sexism in American history, and she identifies issues such as abortion and day care as those that cross class and racial lines. LEILA RUPP, *"Mother of the* Volk*: The Image of Women in Nazi Ideology."* Rupp is concerned with showing the dynamic development of Nazi ideology regarding women. Official party philosophy—that there were rigidly separate legitimate realms of activity for men and women and that women served the state by bearing children—was challenged by Nazi "feminists" who argued that German women could contribute in ways beyond the scope of the home, and who pointed to an ancient Aryan matriarchy to support their view. Rupp notes that National Socialism found a great deal of support among all strata of women "because it accorded them a prominent place in society in roles which they themselves considered their primary ones." Her most provocative point is that National Socialism was an effective challenge to the women's movement of the 1920s. While it appealed to women's traditional conservative upbringing, its image of the Ideal Woman was quite modern—youthful, athletic and competent—thus incorporating freedom and achievement into women's service to the state as future mothers. SUSAN GUBAR, *"The Female Monster in Augustan Satire."* Gubar uses examples of 17th-century satirical literature (especially Swift) and poetry, which present monstrous characterizations of women, to support the theoretical views of Karen Horney and Simone de Beauvoir. Brief articles dealing with rape history (by Shorter) and psychology (by Albien), feminist research in Canada (by Eichler), mother-teaching conflict (by Lightfoot), images of mad women in Elizabethan drama (by Charney and Charney) and over-representation of black women in North Carolina prisons (by French). An invaluable research tool is provided by PATRICIA K. BALLOU, *"Bibliographies for Research on Women."* SME

STUDIES IN SOVIET THOUGHT, 17:2 (October 1977)
Reidel Publishing Co., P.O. Box 17, Dordrecht, Holland. $46 per year (4 issues). GEORGE BRENKERT, *"Marx, Engels and the Relativity of Morals."* Reconciles many of the seemingly contradictory statements of Marx and Engels concerning the relativity of morals by showing how their ethical claims about particular societies are made within the context of the material bases of those societies. In so doing, the author exposes the vacuous logicism of analytical ethical philosophy. PAVEL KOVALY, *"Maurice Merleau-Ponty and the Problem of Self-Accusations."* An accurate but dated account of Merleau-Ponty's critique of Marx's "objectified theory of history which leaves no room whatsoever for subjectivity." Plus short book reviews, including scathing reviews of Marcuse's *Studies in Critical Theory*, Schroyer's *Critique of Domination*, and Adorno's *Jargon of Authenticity.* DD

STUDIES IN SOVIET THOUGHT, 17:4 (December 1977)
ALEXANDER YANOV, *"The Fate of the Russian Idea."* Claims that the "russian idea" expressed by the nationalist faction of the present-day Russian opposition is the same as that of the Russophiles of more than a century ago. Describes four generations of Slavophiles in Russia and concludes that "the Black Hundred's spirit and Stalin's anti-Semitism were only various stages in and natural consequences of Slavophilism." YURI GLAZOV, "The Devils *by Dostoevsky and the Russian Intelligentsia."* An interpretative essay on *The Devils.* Claims that though the novel was long held in disrepute among Soviet literary critics (for being so critical of Russian socialists), it is now being lauded by the Soviet authorities who need and appreciate Dostoevsky's deep-seated mistrust of any violent uprising against the existing order. ANDREY KUDRYAVTSEV, *"The Past and Present of the Intelligentsia."* Claims that the Russian intelligentsia was a Westernized layer of the country that acted as a buffer between two opposite inner social structures: the monarchic and the village-communal. Regarding the intelligentsia as a group that exists best in a context of social and cultural pluralism, the author maintains that there was no intelligentsia in Western societies. Since the world is becoming one global social-cultural system, however, the author makes the quixotic claim that there now exists a Western intelligentsia that might unite with the Russian and Third World intelligentsias to become a viable political force. DAVID ZILBERMAN, *"Orthodox Ethics and the Matter of Communism."* Questionable analysis of the Soviet social system and traditional Russian society.

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Tries to show that there is a correspondence between the material essence of Soviet communism and the Byzantine-Russian tradition of Orthodox Christian ethics similar to the relation Weber established between Protestantism and capitalism. DD

THEORY AND SOCIETY, 5:2

Elsevier Scientific Publishing Co., P.O. Box 330, Amsterdam, Holland. $18 per year. PAUL DIMAGGIO, MICHAEL USEEM, *"Social Class and Arts Consumption: The Origins and Consequences of Class Differences in Exposure to the Arts in America."* Seeks to contribute to the development of a theory of the political economy of culture in the U.S. by focusing on cultural consumption. Examines the origins and consequences of unequal consumption of the arts in American and finds that different tastes result from differential class socialization. GEORGE ROSS, *"Marxism and the New Middle Classes: French Critiques."* Examines the French literature on the "new middle class," which indicates that this class will probably move to the left. H.G. KOENIGSBERGER, *"Monarchies and Parliaments in Early Modern Europe, Dominium Regale or Dominium Politicum et Regale."* Examines through historical examples the problem of how varying distributions of political power between kings and parliaments arise. Finds that Hintze's theory is inadequate, and Elias' theory lacks precision. ROD AYA, *"Norbert Elias and 'The Civilizing Process'."* A brief historical account of Elias' life and his most important work, *Ueber den Prozess der Zivilisation."* Suggests that the latter may help fill some theoretical holes in Marxism and social history. NORBERT ELIAS, *"On Transformations of Aggressiveness."* A revision of "Ueber Wandlungen der Angriffslust" from *Ueber den Prozess of Zivilisation.* Elias sees a "civilizing" of aggression occurring as one looks back on history. This comes about in a movement from individual enjoyment of war and inflicting suffering to solidarity of friends to fighting for a good cause to the centralization of power in the state that controls and uses violence. STANISLAS FONTAINE, *"The Civilizing Process Revisited: Interview with Elias."* Elias discusses the process of civilization for the last 500 years. ERWIN H. EPSTEIN, *"The Social Control Thesis and Educational Reform in Dependent Nations."* Examines recent developments in dependency theory that suggest that violence can be avoided in dependent countries by using education to undermine capitalist structures and lead to a socialist state. DAVID B. ZILBERMAN, *"A Social Portrait of the Soviet Intelligentsia."* L.G. Churchward's *The Soviet Intelligentsia: An Essay on the Social Structure and Roles of Soviet Intellectuals during the 1960s* is criticized for having a strong "Moscowcentric" bias in the analysis of the Soviet intelligentsia. This and other defects of the book are traced to Churchward's theoretical position, which assumes the proliferation of specialized managerial and organizational functions (bureaucracy). RR

WORLD MARXIST REVIEW, 21:1 (January 1978)

Progress Subscription Service, 71 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ont. M5V 2P6, Canada. $7.50 per year (12 issues). LUIS COAVALAN, *"Chile: The Unarmed Road of Revolution."* Synthesis of the mistakes made by the Popular Unity government. Emphasis on the notion that "hegemony of the working class and the leading role of its vanguard are the crucial factors" to a successful socialist government. SANDOR GASPER, *"Builders of Developed Socialism."* Descriptive account of the Hungarian trade unions' contribution to party policy, socialist competition, education, economic, social and cultural development. WILLIAM SALGOVIC *"Progress of Socialist Nations."* Vulgar Marxist-Leninist approach to settling the national question among the Czech and Slovak nations. Emphasis placed on promoting international brotherhood through equalization of economic and social development. *"African Panorama: Discussion with Participants from Varoius Pro-Socialist African Countries."* A general account of economic development in socialist-oriented African nations. Focuses on the basic economic, social and political problems, but lacks an analytic perspective. HP

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